SHADOWRUN

CATALYST game labs

CORE RULEBOOK

EVERYTHING HAS A PRICE

There are cracks in the world. They're slender, dark, and often cold, but they are the only things that keep you hidden. Keep you alive. They are the shadows of the world, and they are where you live.

You are a shadowrunner, thriving in the margins, doing the jobs no one else can. You have no office, no permanent home, no background to check. You are whatever you make yourself. Will you seek justice? Sow seeds of chaos? Sell out to the highest bidder? It's up to you, but this much is certain—if you do nothing, the streets will eat you alive.

You can survive—even flourish—as long as you do what it takes. Sacrifice part of your soul for bleeding-edge gear. Push the limits of your will learning new and dangerous magic. Wire yourself into the Matrix, making your mind one with screaming streams of data. It'll cost you something—everything does—but you can make it worth the price.

SHADOWRUN, FIFTH EDITION is the newest version of one of the most popular and successful role-playing worlds of all time—a fusion of man, magic and machine in a dystopian near-future. With rules for character creation, magic, combat, Matrix hacking, rigging, and more, you have everything you need to face the challenges of the Sixth World.

SHADOWRUN
FIFTH EDITION

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SHADOWRUN >noun

Any movement, action, or series of such made in carrying out plans which are illegal or quasilegal.

WorldWide WordWatch
2050 archive

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But that's enough credits, right? Let's hit the streets. Let's show 'em what we got. Let's be faster, stronger, and smarter than the other vermin. Let's earn some cash, but even more important let's earn some street cred, so that the shadows know our name while the megacorps don't know what hit 'em.

Let's go shadowrunning!

—JMH

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FUTURE DYSTOPIA

Welcome to *Shadowrun, Fifth Edition*. Welcome to the streets. If you're here, it's because you think you have what it takes to be a shadowrunner. And if you got it, we definitely want to help you use it. What you have to understand, though, is that not everyone's got it. So we're going to throw a quick screening interview at you, just to make sure you're ready to hit the shadows. Answer fast—no one's got time to sit around these days.

Do you have imagination? And your own weapon?

If you're in a dark alley and the earth buckles under your feet, and some being materializes from the ground and prepares to attack, are you ready to make that thing—whatever it is—hurt?

If the situation suddenly changes in the middle of a mission, and you're swarmed by security guards who weren't supposed to be there, and you've got bullets, drones, and magic lightning streaming down on you, can you keep your shit together?

Will you trade your flesh and blood for steel and chrome?

Will you risk blowing out your mind to seize a piece of the magic power flowing through everything?

Will you put your whole self into the Matrix so you can be faster than the next guy, even if it means you might have your brain seared by biofeedback?

Will you pay what it costs to be the best?

Forget the rest of the interview—the last question is the only one that matters. If you've got the guts and the will, you're ready for the streets. There are plenty of jobs waiting for you. Top-secret research plans need to be stolen from closely guarded R&D labs. Street gangs need rival leaders to disappear. Powerful executives need to be protected from street rabble looking to take their cash or kidnap them for ransom. Hidden artifacts need to be recovered from toxic wastelands. And if you're willing, there are always people offering cash in return for putting someone down.

I won't lie to you—it won't be easy. The Man takes on a million forms, and all of them work hard to keep you down. Organized crime outfits want your blood, and the corporations want your soul. The cops and the government, of course, just want you put away somewhere, out of sight and out of mind. Maybe they'll get you in a cell, maybe in a tomb. Either option works for them.

But all those people who want to bring you down? Let them come. You didn't choose the life of a shadowrunner to run away from trouble. You picked it to be in control, to keep from selling out to anyone. So bring it on. You have everything you need. You have enough to be more than a street criminal, more than a run-of-the-mill shadowrunner. You have what it takes to be a legend.

It starts now.

SHADOW SLANG

When you hit the streets, sling the lingo like a pro with this handy guide.

breeder *n.* Ork slang for a "normal" human.

buzz *v.* Go away. Buzz off.

chill *adj.* Good, cool, acceptable.

chip truth *n.* A fact or honest statement.

chipped *adj.* Senses, skills, reflexes, muscles, and so on, enhanced by cyberware.

chrome *n.* Cyberware, especially obvious enhancements.

chummer *n.* Friend, used in the same sense as "pal" or "buddy."

clip *n.* A box magazine for a firearm.

comm *n.* Short for commlink, your phone, handheld computer, music player, game device, and more in the palm of your hand.

corp *n.* Corporation. *adj.* Corporate.

cred *n.* Money. Reputation, especially good reputation.

dandelion eater *n.* (vulgar) An elf.

dataslave *n.* Corporate decker or other data-processing employee.

datasteal *n.* Theft of data from a computer, usually by decking.

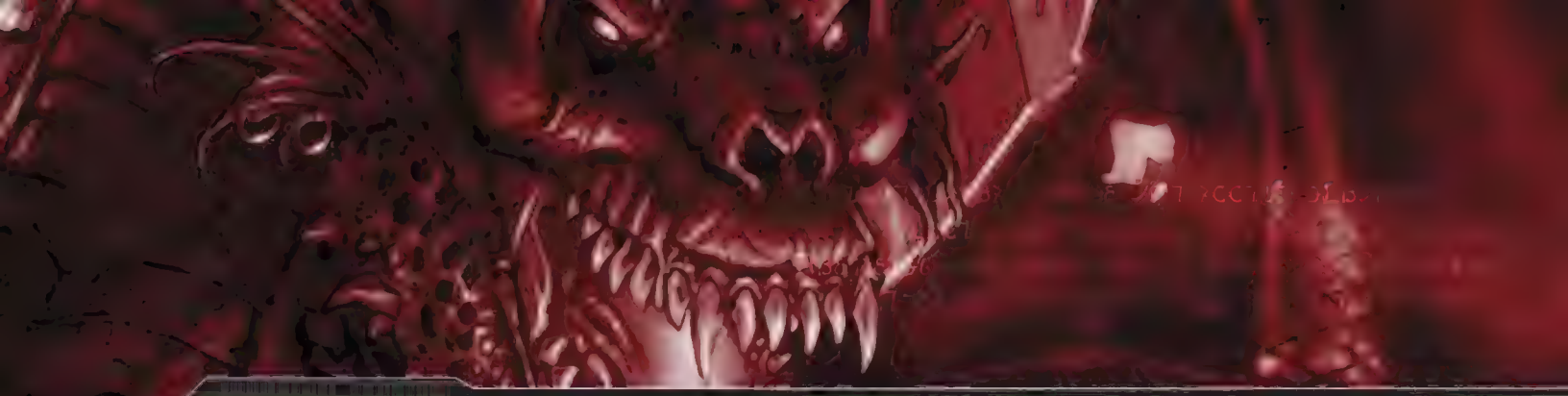
deck *n.* A cyberdeck. *v.* To use a cyberdeck, usually illegally.

decker *n.* A person who illegally uses a cyberdeck.

deckhead *n.* Simsense abuser.

drek *n.* (vulgar) Feces. A common curse word.

dump *v.* To be involuntarily ejected from the Matrix.



dumpshock *n.* The painful sensation of being forcibly ejected from the Matrix while deeply involved in multi-sensory interactions.

exec *n.* A corporate executive.

frag *v.* (vulgar) Common swear word referring to the act of copulation.

fragged *adj.* (vulgar) Broken, in trouble.

geek *v.* To kill.

go-gang *n.* A vehicular gang.

hacker *n.* Someone who illegally interacts with the Matrix, either by using a cyberdeck (as a "decker") or with the power of their mind (as a "technomancer").

halfer *n.* (vulgar) A dwarf.

hoi interject. (Dutch) Hi, a familiar form of greeting.

hoop *n.* (vulgar) A common curse word referring to a person's backside.

hose *v.* Louse up. Screw up.

ice *n.* Security software. From "intrusion countermeasures" or IC.

jack *v.* To connect or disconnect to the Matrix or other device via a jack. Use jack in to mean establishing the connection, jack out to mean breaking a connection. Using jack alone refers to changing from one state to the other.

jander *v.* To walk in an arrogant yet casual manner; to strut.

jing *n.* Money, usually cash.

keeb *n.* (vulgar) An elf.

kobun *n.* (Japanese) A member of a Yakuza clan.

meat *n.* A physical body. Pertaining to the physical world. Organs harvested for sale.

merc *n.* A mercenary.

mojo *n.* (Caribbean) Magic. A spell.

Mr. Johnson *n.* Refers to an anonymous employer or corporate agent, regardless of gender or national origin.

mundane *n.* (vulgar) Non-magician. *adj.* Non-magical.

nutrisoy *n.* A cheaply processed food product derived from soybeans

nuyen *n.* The world's standard currency.

omae *n.* A close friend. Can be used sarcastically.

organlegging *v.* Trading in organs or cyberware harvested from formerly living people.

oyabun *n.* (Japanese) The head of a Yakuza clan.

pawn n. (derogatory) Street slang for Knight Errant officers

paydata *n.* A datafile worth money on the black market.

pixie *n.* (vulgar) An elf. An elf poser.

plex *n.* A metropolitan complex, short for metroplex.

poli *n.* A policlub or a policlub member. *adj.* Pertaining to a policlub.

razorgirl *n.* A female with extensive combat enhancements.

razorguy *n.* A male with extensive combat enhancements.

roke *adj.* Overly elaborate or unnecessarily detailed. From a shortening of Baroque.

samurai *n.* (Japanese) Mercenary or muscle for hire. Implies an honor code or a good reputation.

sarariman *n.* (Japanese) A corporate employee. From a mispronunciation of salaryman.

screamer *n.* Credstick or other ID that triggers alarms if used.

scrip *n.* A currency that is not nuyen, usually referring to currency issued by a megacorporation.

simsense *n.* A sensory broadcast or recording that lets the viewer feel and experience what the participants feel and experience.

SIN *n.* System Identification Number. Identification number assigned to each person in the society.

SINless *adj.* Lacking a SIN. *n.* A SINless person.

SINner *n.* A person with a SIN. An honest person.

slot *n.* (vulgar) Mild curse word referring to female genitalia. *v.* To insert a chip or credstick into chip or credstick reading device.

slot and run *v.* Hurry up. Get to the point. Move it.

so ka (Japanese) I understand. I get it.

soykaf *n.* Ersatz coffee substitute made from soybeans.

sprawl *n.* A metroplex (see plex); *v.* fraternize below one's social level.

squat *n.* Abandoned urban area used for housing. (vulgar) A dwarf.

squishy *n.* (vulgar) A dwarf, elf, or human. Usually used by orks and trolls.

Star, the *n.* The police. Originally referring to Lone Star specifically.

static *n.* Trouble, usually social in nature.

swag *adj.* Awesome.

trideo *n.* The three-dimensional successor to video. Trid for short.

trog *n.* (vulgar) An ork or troll. From troglodyte.

tusker *n.* (vulgar) An ork or troll.

vatjob *n.* A person with extensive cyberware replacement, reference is to a portion of the process during which the patient must be submerged in nutrient fluid.

wagemage *n.* A magician (usually mage) employed by a corporation.

wageslave *n.* A low-level corporate employee.

wetwork *n.* Assassination. Murder.

wired *adj.* Equipped with cyberware, especially increased reflexes.

wiz *adj.* Wonderful, excellent.

wizard *n.* A magician, usually a mage.

wizworm *n.* A dragon.

Yak *n.* (Japanese) Yakuza. Either a clan member or a clan itself.

zaibatsu *n.* (Japanese) A megacorporation.

ANOTHER NIGHT, ANOTHER RUN

Smoke filled the air, cut through by the dancing, impossibly straight crimson lines of laser beams. Lights strobed all around him, showing Gentry still-frame images of bodies clashing violently, muscles heaving, chrome flashing razor-sharp contrast against scuffed black leather. Belly-deep, he felt as much as heard the staccato thrums of too-loud percussion, shaking him to his core. He ignored it all and concentrated on the AR feed piped straight to his brain by top-end hardware and his customized implants.

This was Gentry's first trip to the Skeleton, and the last thing he wanted was to get turned around in the press of thrashing bodies on the dance floor, dazzled by the lights and fog, smothered by the surrounding hordes of metahumanity. Hardpoint had sent them all directions for the half-secret—and, Gentry dearly hoped, well-soundproofed—back rooms, and ignoring reality for his AR overlay had gotten Gentry this far in life, hadn't it? Meatside light shows had never done him any favors. The Matrix was where the action was. Augmented reality or full-on virtual, whatever—that's where Gentry did his best work.

The heaving crowd jumped and roared in time to the Archfiends, an all-elf rock band with more guitars and good looks than talent. That part, at least, made Gentry feel at home. He hadn't been back to Tír Tairngire since his sentence had been commuted, but seeing a rock band of nothing but elves reminded him of home. The crowd had enough humans in it so that Gentry wasn't as self-conscious as he'd been back in the Tír, though. Here, his rounded ears didn't stick out.

He was just one of many, wedging his way through a brawling pit disguised as a dance floor, overcrowded with all metahumanity had to offer, humans included: weekend-warrior wannabes slumming it from Downtown and Renton, soaking in the dirt and danger of a trip to the edge of the Barrens. Then there was the everyday Redmond populace, as tough and stained as the denim and leather they all wore. Redmond being Redmond, gangers made up a sizable chunk of the crowd. Gentry saw a tight knot of orks from the Crimson Crush (louder and more violent than the slam-dancers near them), a lone woman in the green and black that marked her a Desolation Angel (looking for trouble and pretty enough some idiot would offer her some before the night was out), and a troll looming over everyone else (not wearing any gang's colors in particular but big enough he didn't have to). Metahumanity, sweating and panting, moving in time to the wailing strings and shouting voices from the stage, flash-lit by a retro light show and the lasers and commlinks some of them waved in white-knuckled fists.

Gentry wrestled his way clear and sucked in a deep breath. Chip-truth, he didn't really care for metahumanity enough to like it packed this tightly around him. Coydog was waiting for him just outside the press of bodies, though, elf-thin and elf-pretty, with raven-dark hair. The leather fringe of her outfit swayed just a bit as she let the Archfiends' latest guitar riff make her move, and a light sheen of sweat covered her bare arms, showing she hadn't been afraid to join in on the dance floor while the night had still been young.

BY RUSSELL ZIMMERMAN

When she noticed him, the Salish elf just laughed and shook her head, then tapped her wrist where someone else might wear a watch.

Gentry made a face and said terrible things about her mother in Sperethiel, knowing that despite her pointed ears and high cheekbones, he knew more of the elven language than she did. She got the gist of it, though, and—still laughing, teeth flashing elf-perfect and white—her little fist thumped into the armor over his shoulder.

"Let's go," Coydog hollered at him, turning to show him which hallway to take. Or, upon reflection, Gentry supposed she might have just called him an asshole. So that he'd know next time, he set his snugged-in earbud's sound filter to pick up her voice.

Coydog sauntered through the shadows of the back halls easy as you please—Gentry was used to that, with elves—but it took him a few seconds to adjust. He thumbed at the dimmer-display for his cyberdeck and sent all the secondary lighting to full power. His cobbled-together hackpack was powered by several cannibalized commlinks strapped to his messenger bag strap, and when he told them to, they could give him at least a little light to see by. The last thing Gentry wanted to do was stumble into Coydog from behind. She'd never let him live it down.

Hardpoint and Sledge were waiting for them in the back room with a half-open window letting moonlight and soft traffic sounds in, and probably a couple of Hardpoint's drones out. The dwarf killed time in the middle of the room, juggling a trio of small KnowSpheres. MCT had designed the drones about three weeks after the Horizon Flying Eye had hit the market, but if you tried to tell him Mitsuhama had copied the design, Hardpoint was liable to kick you in the shin or punch you somewhere uncomfortably higher. He'd been in the business long enough to have gray streaks through his beard, but the dwarf was stubbornly loyal despite what life had thrown at him.

Sledge, meanwhile, did what he normally did: glowered. Gentry knew the ork was vain enough, in his street-tough way, to keep a synthflesh covering over most of his cyberarms, not wanting his augmentations to ruin his tattoos and the biceps that were so central to his self-esteem. His forearms, though, were no-frill monstrosities, Evo-specced combat chrome that didn't pretend to be anything but armor plating and hidden weapons. Right this second, those arms were crossed across his broad chest, and he took turns glaring at Hardpoint for his goofing off, Coydog for the perpetually amused smirk she always wore, and Gentry for being late.

He settled on Gentry, natch. Just the decker's luck.

"You're late," the razorboy grunted, showing tusks in a snarl. "We're supposed to be professionals, breeder. Mr. Johnson'll be here any minute."

Gentry shrugged, armored jacket rustling and soft lights from his hackpack sending shadows dancing.

"Nasty traffic, Sledge. Hardpoint's directions had me rolling through contested turf. Skirmish started up, an' traffic went for crap. Spikes and Ancients going at it again, you know how it is."

Hardpoint didn't seem to notice he'd been blamed. He just kept juggling his KnowSpheres. Coydog looked for something clean to sit on. Sledge didn't let it lie, though.

"So next time you geek the elves, end the firefight, an' get here on time. You ain't back in your precious Portland. You gotta earn your nuyen in Seattle, kid."

"Right." Gentry sighed and rolled his eyes, ignoring that, if anything, he was probably a year or two older than the ork. "What, you think being a human criminal in the Tír was just a walk in the park, huh?"

"You must'a treated it like it was, breeder." Sledge pushed off from the wall he'd been leaning against, arms uncrossing as he took a few steps towards the human, "Since you got your ass locked up and put to work, didn't you?"

Gentry's eyes narrowed. It wasn't about timeliness or professionalism, it was about machismo and pride. Both of them had too much of it. Sledge took a perverse pleasure in rubbing Gentry's nose in the fact he'd been arrested back in the Tír and had to work off a long sentence playing the hyperviolent sport urban brawl, while Sledge had so far avoided Knight Errant or any other law enforcement body. The violent ork also resented that he wasn't the team's leader any more, and—knowing that—Gentry had long since been ready for a confrontation. He bet Sledge wouldn't talk so tough if someone took advantage of a backdoor to his personal area network and shut those fancy arms down for diagnostics.

"Before you two cripple each other, I thought you might want to know our boss is outside."

Hardpoint's voice, all business, interrupted the brewing staredown. A fresh bevy of lights blinked on the external display panels of his MCT-issued headware, a sure sign he was actively monitoring one of his recon drones.

"Maybe we should take the job and burn off some steam, huh boys? Having both of you along for the gig helps our odds, I'm sure."

"I dunno, HP," Coydog teased and flashed a wicked grin, "If one of 'em geeks the other, it means bigger shares all around!"

Sledge kept up the glare, but Gentry lost interest and turned away.

"You guys are right. We need to focus, Sledge." The decker sent mental commands to his hackpack, shoving icons around and canceling the viruses he'd been about to upload into the ork's PAN.

"Let's go meet the boss and get the details."

Sledge wasn't thrilled with leaving his Harley back at the Skeleton, but after a short conversation with the righteous tusker running the door, he was satisfied his bike would be cared for. That punk Gentry's sleek Mirage looked fast but fragile next to Sledge's chopper, but Coydog's muddy Gopher pickup dwarfed both of them. Satisfied they'd all be there when they got back, the big ork clambered into Hardpoint's big van, a GMC Bulldog.

But right away, Gentry started whining and wrecked what should've been a quiet ride.

"I'm telling you, facial recognition pegged the guy. Mr. Johnson's from Ares. You can see him in this fundraiser picture, he's part of a security detail, if you'd just take a look at—"

"Well, I ain't takin' a look at it," Sledge cut Gentry off with an angry chop at the air. His new sword was sheathed, but he still liked waving the thing around to interrupt the wannabe daisy-eater.

"It ain't our job to care, chummer. We took the job and the up-front payment, so now we do it. Period. We go in, download the specs, record the infiltration. That's it. That's all. It's simple."

"No, it isn't. It's never that simple! This guy's hiring us to do a run against his own company, and you don't think that's a little weird?"

Sledge rolled his eyes.

"I'm saying it don't matter if it's weird. It's just another night. Just another paycheck." Sledge reached across the van and jabbed the decker in the chest with his sheathed blade again. "Maybe he's Ares internal affairs or somethin'. Maybe he's from another department. Maybe he's angling for his boss's job an' wants us to make him look bad. Lots of maybes, but none of 'em matter. It's just another run."

"Listen, if you'll give me five minutes to ..."

"No time, shadowkiddies." Hardpoint's voice cut off their argument, and the dwarf unplugged himself from the Bulldog's dash. "This is our stop. Sledge, you're on point"

Sledge hopped out of the van smoothly, leaving Gentry to fumble with this seatbelt and strap his goggles and headset on. The ork's movements came herky-jerk quick now, his enhanced reflexes turned on and running hot. He had a blocky AK-98 in his hands, an Ares handcannon holstered at his hip, and his new pigsticker, long and thin, slung over his back. It was an official *Neil the Ork Barbarian* repro, all thin, curved, and fantasy-stylized right out of a high-budget tridflick, but it had a wicked sharp mono-edge, and that's all Sledge cared about. The team had a block and a half of broken-down Seattle to cover, and Sledge knew the streets better than the rest of them. He led the way from cover to cover, alley to alley, hurrying them through the rain-slick shadows. The Seattle shadows were his home, and urban gunfights his way of life. They knew he'd get them there.

Sledge shot a backwards glance as he waited at a corner and flashed his tusks in a smirk at Gentry, who was second. The decker had a Colt Government 2066—which wasn't the worst gun in the world, Sledge grudgingly admitted, and Gentry wasn't the worst shot—in his hand, but the real skill he brought to the team was strapped all over his body. It was some sort of drek-hot Renraku hackpack rig that Gentry'd sometimes babble on and on about like anyone but him or maybe Hardpoint gave a damn. The human's eyes weren't chipped up like Sledge's, and the breeder had to wear those goggles of his, half shooting glasses and half supercomputers, to use a smartlink or see in the dark.

Sledge snorted.

Coydog and her cowboy boots came last. The elf was different. Salish tribal born and raised, but now marking time in Seattle's Council Island and Everett neighborhoods. She had a foot in both worlds. Native and Anglo, backwoods and city streets; Sledge liked her. Everyone liked her. She had a big Browning pistol holstered at her waist in a sleek, modern gunbelt that didn't quite fit in with the feathers in her hair, the strings of colored beads, the leather fringes on her clothes. She was an interesting gal, Coydog. Sledge saw her lips move, saw hints of color flash and ripple from her hands, and then felt a cool breeze swirl around them all. He knew what that meant, and would've smiled if smiling was his style. The shaman had gone to work and called up a friendly spirit. They'd be hidden from prying eyes, at least partially, but Sledge sure wasn't going to let that trick him into relaxing.

The ork stopped at the building's loading entrance, back to the wall, covering the team as they approached. It was time for Gentry to do his job. His smartgoggles brightened and his Colt was holstered as he began to work with his own brand of magic. No, not really magic, just skill. Soft blue lights flared and danced while the decker's fingers shifted and tapped, pecking away at an imaginary keyboard that his Renraku hardware spun into existence. Sledge covered them while the decker worked, smartlink reticule and the muzzle of his AK sweeping the streets.

The ork growled impatience low in his throat like a junkyard dog, his reflexes wired up so fast it seemed like the decker was working in slow motion. Coydog laid a gentle hand on Gentry's shoulder and whispered something encouraging to him, but Sledge didn't have a chance to say something snarky about it. Maybe a half-second later, the doors slid open. Fraggin' finally.

The ork gave Hardpoint a nod, and the rigger lifted his hand. Several drones leaped to answer his call. A sleek little glossy-black beetle drone, an MCT FlySpy, lifted off from his palm and led the way into the building, with Sledge and his AK just behind. Hardpoint rummaged in his pockets and tugged out his KnowSpheres, and soon enough the trio of little black globes were buzzing through the air circling the team, recording the job per Mr. Johnson's explicit request. The FlySpy, nimble and silent, sped down the hallway ahead of them as the team hurried inside, getting in out of the Seattle drizzle and putting walls and doors between them and the external security teams.

The FlySpy led the way. Hardpoint's tiny drone buzzed along ahead of them, making sure that security cameras were where they were supposed to be, or that a corpsec kill-team wasn't lurking around every corner. The dwarf worked his left hand to pilot the little machine, fingers splayed, twisting and planing his hand this way and that, angling his palm to orient and maneuver the spy-drone, headware and extensive control rig electronics making it unnaturally responsive to such simple commands. He had one eye looking through the drone's optical sensors and the other squinted half-shut, while Coydog led him through the halls and kept him from bumping into anything.

Gentry was the slowest of them, here; every camera the FlySpy tagged on their team's heads-up display—visible to all of them but Coydog, who said she kept losing her AR glasses though Hardpoint insisted she was breaking them on purpose—became his responsibility. Sledge gave Gentry a little nudge and a grunt each time he spotted one, just to make sure the geek was on top of things. And to hurry him up.

Gentry reached out through the Matrix, his AR-goggles bright with streaming data and security override commands, cracking into their nodes one at a time and convincing each camera to run a loop of the last minute over and over again before they stepped into the frame. Gentry's skills convinced corporate cameras to shut their eyes tight while the team snuck past. If the decker kept it up, Sledge knew their job would be a whole lot easier.

It was slow going, and tense. The FlySpy took point, Sledge cleared each hallway with the muzzle of his sturdy Kalashnikov, then came Hardpoint and Gentry, only half there, most of their attention sapped away by the electronic wonderland of the Matrix. The dwarf's three KnowSpheres swirled around the team, tiny dog-brains obediently recording. Coydog rode herd, listening for doors opening and closing behind them, the stomp of security boots, the wail of alarms. Slow and tense, and careful, too, but Sledge would get them there. They didn't see another living soul. Together they threaded a careful path through winding Ares corporate hallways and stairwells, slicing their way deeper and deeper into the belly of the beast.

And then, suddenly, there they were: dataterminal 501. Sledge took a knee and braced his rifle against a cubicle wall, nodding for Gentry to move in. It was showtime.

Sledge watched as Gentry settled into this corporate spider's chair—he had to admit that hacking into a Matrix security agent's terminal as a way into the whole system was a decent plan, assuming he could pull it off—and adjusted a few of the sub-systems on his makeshift cyberdeck. Then Gentry pulled a long, slender cable from a spool on his right bracer, the main body of his illegal 'deck, and reached toward a port on the Ares counter-hacker's workstation.

Sledge thought about wishing the decker good luck, but decided against it.

That might have been a mistake.

Hardpoint knew better than Sledge or Coydog what the decker was up to. The dwarf was no expert console cowboy like Gentry, but he had a handle on the basics of illicit Matrix interfacing. He knew how fast things happened in full virtual reality, how every nanosecond counted and how everything, from your own icon to the intrusion countermeasures that threatened it, moved at the speed of thought. Gentry flew in VR when he could, but Hardpoint preferred to keep one foot in the real world. That was the difference between them. The human liked to escape reality fully in the Matrix, where the dwarf preferred to influence the meat-world, just through drones instead of his own two hands when he could help it.

But the speeds were the same. The electronic rush. The stakes. Hardpoint knew, even if the rough-edged samurai and the city shaman didn't, how quickly things could go wrong in an electronic contest.

He heard and saw it through his own eyes and ears, as well as the audio and optical sensor suites in four different drones, when the claxons started to howl and the security lights began to flash. It hadn't taken long, but Hardpoint hadn't expected it to. Things moved fast in VR. Sometimes a little too fast.

The dwarf watched through his FlySpy's optics as Gentry rocked in the chair, lurching from side to side. He called his littlest drone back to him—no point in stealth, now—and stowed it in the armored pouch on his belt. He kept his KnowSpheres running and recording, one swooping all around the team on autopilot, the other two racing away to scout. The decker jerked again in the big chair, body going tense and rigid, somewhere between having a seizure and taking a punch. Then again. And again.

"He gonna die?" Sledge didn't look up from the sights of his AK, unperturbed by the security alert.

"Spirits, I hope not." Coydog bit her lip.

"I doubt it," Hardpoint said, half his attention elsewhere. He piped commands through his headware to the waiting Bulldog, disabling security measures, firing up the engine, and getting it rolling in their direction for a quick escape.

"No," Gentry himself said, reaching out with one hand to unplug himself. The human stood and swiped the back of his other hand under his nose to smear away some blood.

"Got the file by the tips of my ears." He shook his head, still unsteady on his feet, and Hardpoint watched through a drone as he blinked heavy eyelids that suddenly had deep bruises

beneath them. Gentry patted his primary commlink, now heavy with stolen data, a sleek Transys Avalon that rested on his hip not far from his Colt.

"I almost got iced, but me and my baby got the job done."

Intrusion countermeasures—IC—could tear a Matrix icon to shreds in nanoseconds. Some IC, the blackest of the black, could do the same to a decker's brain and body through custom-programmed biofeedback. Judging from Gentry's condition, the files had been more heavily protected than Mr. Johnson had mentioned.

Hardpoint started to get fresh information from his recon KnowSpheres, his reliable MCT headware giving him several datastream overlays at once.

"Welcome parties are coming. West side, down three stories," he said, monotone, matter-of fact. He recorded and reported all at once, telling the others about the incoming security teams even while his headware showed him black-clad security troopers, armored head to toe, faceless beneath their glossy helmets. In their midst loomed a taller, broader, figure, a massive troll, too big to even fit in the full-body security armor the rest of them wore.

"And east, one floor down." A second group was jogging up the opposite stairwell, looking to trap them. A pale woman in a dark suit led a handful of heavily armored guards. Behind them, Hardpoint recognized combat drones; Duelists, the experimental bipedal drones Ares was manufacturing in this very facility.

Gentry and Sledge could see the problem over the team's shared cam-feed. Before that KnowSphere could get a better look, the woman raised a hand and whispered a word. A flashing bolt enveloped Hardpoint's little spy drone, and the display window turned to static.

Sledge didn't speak, just led the team down the left hallway where they'd have a better chance of making it upstairs unimpeded. He shouldered the door open and threw a pair of metallic spheres down the stairwell in one smooth motion, then took a knee. Gentry led the rest of them up the stairs hurriedly. Sledge's broad orkish frame blocked Hardpoint's curious KnowSphere from being able to track the grenades as they bounced down the stairs, but there was no denying the ensuing explosion was impressive. Hardpoint's ears rang from the twin blasts, but he was able to hear the wailing of injured guards through the audial suites in his drones. Sledge hadn't moved, just waited there with his AK shouldered.

One of Hardpoint's drones watched as Gentry kicked the roof access door open, the other floated above and behind Sledge. Hardpoint and Coydog burst onto the roof behind the decker just as Sledge's AK started to bark and fill the stairwell behind them with muzzle flashes and fast-moving bullets. The first heavily armored guard to recover from the grenades and stumble into view caught a burst for his trouble and went tumbling back down the stairs. Then came a second and third, and Sledge burnt the rest of his magazine knocking them back out of view.

Slivers of Hardpoint's attention flitted from drone to drone, watching as the Ares security troll lumbered into view. He swung up a huge gun and the dwarf's KnowSphere and Sledge both scrambled out of the way. Hardpoint felt the gun go off on the roof, even two stories away, as the Panther Assault Cannon roared like thunder and sent a round smashing a fist-sized hole through the wall where Sledge had been just a second earlier. His drone whirred loudly as it tried to keep up with the impossibly quick ork, flying up the stairs after him as he ran to catch up to the rest of the team. Just as the security door opened up and the second Ares team burst into the stairwell near them, the drone's audio equipment picked up the sound of a pair of metallic spheres bouncing down behind the ork.

The dwarf fought a little smile as he heard the second pair of grenades go off, but the hulking troll and his assault cannon worried him. Ares was so concerned with securing the facility that they were willing to blast giant holes in it to try to stop a few shadowunners. Security, not practicality, mattered to them here, and that made them unpredictable. Unpredictable people were dangerous to get into firefights with.

Hardpoint *tsked* under his breath and shook his head, sending out a fresh series of mental commands. The only way to fight fire

Coydog still wasn't exactly sure how everything had gone so wrong, so quickly. One second Gentry had been doing whatever he did in the Matrix, and the next their whole night had gone to pot. Claxons everywhere, emergency lights painting the whole building red, and Hardpoint and Sledge rushing them up stairs, a half-breath ahead of onrushing security goons.

The crew darted across the roof, heading toward the nearest building and starting to cross over. The Ares security team burst up the stairwell behind them, missing maybe half of their number, several of the survivors with armor scratched and scarred from Sledge's explosives. The troll stood head and shoulders over the rest. The slender, pale woman in her dark suit pointed, and they lifted their guns. Supplementary laser-sights flickered to life beneath their assault rifle barrels, and gunshots rang out.

Gentry leapt courier-quick across the gap between buildings, firing blind behind him with his big Colt autopistol. Sledge sprinted across a ventilation pipe, chip-quick, and spun to unload a second magazine from his AK. Coydog carefully holstered her Browning and leapt across the gap, nimble as a deer. Hardpoint stood where he was, letting his stubby little Ingram hang by his side, and just lifted his arms and grinned. His reinforcements were here.

A flurry of grenades fell onto the roof, fired one after another from a trio of miniature helicopter-like drones that swooped low overhead. Coydog recognized Hardpoint's MCT-Nissan Roto-drones a second before the team's activity was covered by thick smoke and a fresh wave of explosions that scattered the security team. The dwarf cackled as he scampered to join them on the new rooftop. Sledge's AK fired and fired, and was soon joined by the autoguns mounted in each of Hardpoint's support drones. Coydog ducked as one of the little KnowSpheres flew by, turning to record the firefight while the larger drones traded fire with the Ares security squad. Between the drifting clouds of thermal smoke and the protection of her own friendly spirit, the security forces had trouble getting clear shots at Coydog and her friends, but the drones' mobility and armor plating were their only real defenses.

She heard Sledge's AK stutter out a long burst and saw the Ares troll stagger but not fall. In the corner of her eye she saw Gentry kicking at the rooftop door that would get them clear of the fight, and everywhere else she looked she saw smoke and muzzle flashes, swooping drones and black-clad security. She reached out with a simple spell and sent an Ares goon stumbling and staggering, exhausted. But didn't quite drop him. She heard Coyote bark laughter at her failure and frowned, drawing up a

fresh wave of mana. The black-armored thug turned to fire at her, no doubt shouting into his helmet, but then he wavered and fell unceremoniously on his face.

Coydog smiled and started to say something smug to no one in particular when the security woman across the way lifted her arms. A sickly blue glow filled the rooftop as she chanted with a voice that scratched Coydog's soul. The elf switched to astral sight to get a better look at what the other magician was up to, and her blood turned cold. The spirit in mid-summoning was terrible, but just as disconcerting was the black, lifeless, no-aura mass of drones that emerged from the stairwell.

"Oh, Ghost," the elf said under her breath as the wave of Duelist anthro-drones led a fresh charge across the rooftop. Her mana spells wouldn't do any good against such soulless automatons. She blinked, dragged her vision back to the material plane, and drew her big Browning out of its holster as though it would do her any good.

Sledge appeared out of nowhere, blocky AK nowhere to be seen, with a blue-glowing sword in one hand and the bucking, death-spitting mass of a big Ares handgun in the other. He barreled into the lead drone with a simple shoulder-check, then she lost a clear view of him as he blurred into motion. A fresh wave of smoke grenades dropped onto the roof, and all she could see of him was the faintly glowing blade and the occasional muzzle flash of a point-blan k shot. Coydog likely couldn't have made out his motions clearly even without the smoke, though, the big ork was moving so fast. Pieces of Duelist sec-drone started to tumble out of the smoke.

The distraction had worked, though. The drones had done their job, and the Ares security magician ducked back into cover, her work complete. There was a flash of too-bright light and a faint droning in the air. Coyote yipped and barked out anger in the back of Coydog's head, and the elf looked up at a twisted insect spirit, all mandibles and outstretched, wriggling legs. She felt bile fill her throat.

And the worst part was, thanks to a locked door and a seven-story drop, they couldn't even run away.

Smoke filled the air, cut through by the dancing, impossibly straight crimson lines of laser beams. Lights strobed all around him, showing Gentry still-frame images of bodies clashing violently, muscles heaving, chrome flashing razor-sharp contrast against scuffed black leather. Belly-deep, he felt as much as heard the staccato thrums of too-loud percussion, shaking him to his core. He ignored it all and concentrated on the AR feed piped straight to his brain by top-end hardware and his customized implants.

They needed him to open the door. The team needed him to dive back into the Matrix and get just this one door open to save all their lives.

Gentry ignored the stutter-flashes of muzzles spitting out round after round, whether from Hardpoint's swooping drones or the Ares Alphas shouldered by corporate muscle. He pushed aside the curses and grunts of exertion where Sledge was, single-handedly, dismantling a half-dozen purpose-built combat drones. He didn't flinch when the Ares troll's cannon sent a round close enough to tug at the edge of his armored jacket, or turn to stare in abject horror at the clawing, chittering nightmare that loomed over Coydog.

He decked. He could more than hold his own in a fight, and he had some subtle combat augs to back it up, but more than that—more than anything—this was who he was, what he did. His mind ran through program after program, subroutine after subroutine, thought about security protocols and lockdown practices, thought about everything the computer might do so he could anticipate it, counter it. He knew electronics backwards and forwards, literally inside and out, and all he had to do, all he had to do in the world right now, was beat this maglock and the hardwired security system supporting it. His Renraku hackpack screamed wirelessly in the back of his mind and ran hot, back-up systems getting shut down and processing power shunted from secondary processors. Bullets flew by and chipped paint from the wall just near him, and Gentry just reached out, irritated, to snap a return shot without looking.

One pop-up window out of many, all juggled at once by Gentry's headware coprocessors and his top-end smart goggles, started to show him what he was missing through his gun's smartlink camera. Hardpoint alternated between twitch-quick piloting and wild cheers as his Roto-drones strafed the looming Ares troll and dodged assault cannon rounds. Sledge hacked the last drone apart and blasted the wreckage point-blank to disentangle it from his trid-flashy sword, then staggered as an enemy burst tore into his armored vest.

The terrible spirit loomed over them, ready to strike. Coydog raised her hands and chanted something in a language Gentry didn't know.

"I'm sorry." Gentry's earbud picked up the elf's voice, wedging past all the background cacophony to hear her whispered apology to empty air.

There was a thunderclap and a flash of sorcery-bright lightning. The enemy spirit, assaulted by Coydog on one plane and by her spirit on another, shrieked in pain and tumbled to pieces. There was a cyclone hanging in midair for a half-second, impaled on the ephemeral insect's claw, before it, too, vanished.

In the same instant, Gentry gave the door locks open and disengage commands thirty-seven different times and one finally got through. Coydog swayed and fell, elf-thin and elf-fragile, having given almost everything within her to blast the spirit to nothingness. Sledge, covered in equal parts blood and oil, dove to snatch her up and—kicking her dropped pistol Gentry's way—hauled her toward safety.

Hardpoint's FlySpy led the way past Gentry's just-opened door, and directions and building schematics began to scroll across the team's network. They had their exit route, finally.

"Straight down, Bulldog's out front," the dwarf whooped and flashed a thumbs up. His sole remaining KnowSphere—the other one lay ruined, the victim of a stray bullet—hovered just over his shoulder as he started down the stairs. Sledge was next, half carrying Coydog, shouldering roughly past Gentry but just for a half-second there, in the doorframe, giving him a nod.

Gentry covered their escape with his Colt in one hand and Coydog's Browning in another, while the remaining Roto-drones split up and swooped wide around the rooftop, still firing, and splitting the corpsecs' attention. A fresh wave of smoke grenades made the cross-building jump risky, and Gentry knew they'd make it clear before the Ares troops caught up to them.

He had the data. Hardpoint had the footage. None of them were dead. Johnson would profit from it all, somehow. It was just another night, just another paycheck, but considerably more than just another run.

THE BATTLE FOUGHT

It had sucked.

The others were scattered, and one of them was a traitor. He hadn't gotten paid nearly as much as he thought he was going to get.

Whippet felt a sharp pain every time he inhaled. He was dizzy, weaving unsteadily through the streets. He had his Street Sweeper perched up on his shoulder, because he needed some visual indication telling people not to fuck with him. He needed it because nothing else about him was accomplishing that right now. His stride was uneven. His gaze was fixed on the plascrete street instead of staring down passers-by.

And the night had started so well.

"I'm going to pay two months' rent, buy twenty bags of potato chips and twenty tins of guacamole, then I'm going to sit and watch trids of every urban brawl match played between '71 and '74."

He saw the look Crawdad gave him, but he didn't care. He was reclined in the passenger seat of the old sportscar and feeling good. Even though the car was parked in a dark alley and not moving.

"Way to aim high, kid," Crawdad said. He kept chewing on whatever it was he always chewed on. Whippet thought maybe it was sunflower seeds dipped in tar. At least, that's what it smelled like.

"Well it's not like that's the only thing I'll do with the cash," Whippet said. "Just the first thing. I'm feeling a little wrung out after all this, you know?"

Crawdad grunted, a sound for which his tusked jaw seemed particularly suited.

"I just wish I had my cycle back there in Puyallup," Whippet said. "That walk—that was no fun. I thought the one dwarf with the chain was going to rip my fingers off. Good hell was he strong! I think he threw Street Rash with one arm!"

"Uh-huh." The ork did not seem to be in a mood to reminisce. Then, responding to some signal Whippet didn't see, he started the car's engine. It clicked to life.

"It's time," he said, and the car moved ahead.

Whippet folded his hands behind his head. At last. Time to get paid.

He had purposefully chosen a route home that would take him through uncrowded streets and industrial areas. He didn't want to run into anyone he knew. He didn't want to run into anyone at all. If no one was watching, he could look as pathetic as he wanted—he could walk slow, he could limp, he could lean against a wall and take a breather. He could afford to show weakness.

That was when he turned the corner and saw the line. There were about twenty people, then the line turned the corner. He

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didn't know how far it went beyond that. The people were standing next to a nondescript grey building, looking a little tense, a little apprehensive, and a little excited. Very little. They were dressed professionally—Whippet could tell it was a line of corp drones. He didn't know what they were doing here, but he knew it wouldn't do to look weak in front of them. He sighed, pull himself up straight, ignored the pain in his leg and his ribs, and walked as smoothly as he could. He saw a few of the corp drones eyeing his gun. He nodded curtly at them.

So far, so good. They found the right vacant lot. Mr. Johnson was there. The rest of the team was there. Crawdad had hauled the item out of his trunk, Mr. Johnson had inspected it and pronounced it satisfactory. The time had now come. The time to put money into Whippet's account. And the others' accounts, too, but whatever. Through great force of will, he did not rub his hands together in anticipation.

That was when the headlights turned on. Two of them, blindingly bright, on the other side of the lot. The car had been impressively quiet in the dark.

Mr. Johnson whirled with an angry expression on his beefsteak face. Air rustled around Snipe, meaning he'd done something or other with magical mojo, but Whippet couldn't tell what. Ozma's fingers moved here and there, getting her drones into position. How she'd missed the approach of the car was something they'd need to ask her about later.

Whippet went for his Street Sweeper, only to find Crawdad's hand on his wrist.

"Slow now," he said. "They wanted to be shooting, we'd already be dead. Keep it calm."

A passenger-side door of the vehicle opened, and a troll slowly unfolded himself from the interior of the car. He walked toward Whippet and the others. His legs moved slowly, but his strides covered so much ground that he moved at a decent clip.

Mr. Johnson whirled on Crawdad. "You idiot! You were followed!"

Crawdad shook his head once. "I told you, I don't get followed."

"Then who clued them in? How did they find me?"

Crawdad tilted his head. "You know who they are?"

Mr. Johnson scowled and didn't answer. He reached into his coat and pulled out an impressively large Ruger Super Warhawk, which he held loosely at his side as the troll approached.

The troll stopped about twenty meters away from Mr. Johnson. He was dressed in a business suit and a dark silk tie that reflected what little light there was. With the lights behind him, he was little more than a silhouette, so other details were difficult to see. "You're playing a dangerous game here, Kirby," he said.

Whippet raised an eyebrow and looked at his other team members, but none of them seemed to care much that they had just learned Mr. Johnson's real name.

"None of this is your concern," Mr. Johnson said. "None of it."

"Materials are missing from the office," the troll said. "That's exactly my concern."

"Nothing's missing," Mr. Johnson said, holding up the package Crawdad had just given him. "It's right here, in employee custody."

The troll sighed. "It doesn't belong in employee custody wandering around the Barrens. It belongs in the office. And it just barely got into your custody after it was in the hands of these runners." He waved off Mr. Johnson before he could say more. "No, the time for talking is done. You're coming with us."

Mr. Johnson looked ready to shout something defiant, but then his jaw locked and no noise came out. His right leg moved forward in a lurching step as if something were pulling it.

"He's being controlled," Snipe said over the team's private channel.

"No shit," Whippet said. "We don't move, they'll take Mr. Johnson, the goodies, and any chance we have of getting paid.

Crawdad didn't hesitate. He brought up both his Predators and leveled them at the troll.

"You can't take him yet," he said. "Man owes us money."

"Why the hell do I care?"

Crawdad shrugged and started to drop his guns. Then he jerked one up and fired. A bullet hit Mr. Johnson in the leg, leaving him writhing on the broken concrete.

Whippet rounded the corner and saw the line of people stretching forward. There was a fairly plain sign on the grey building. It said "Job fair."

Good hell, he thought. These were worse than corp drones—they were wannabe corp drones. Unemployed and looking for whatever crumbs the corp doing the hiring was willing to drop their way.

As he approached the front of the line, he saw a guy in a battered coat sitting on the curb, begging. Begging from the unemployed, he thought. Nice move. A dwarf with a black beard was standing next to him, hand on his shoulder, consoling him. Whippet could hear a little of their conversation.

"Things can't stay down forever, right?" the dwarf was saying. "The fact that someone's hiring is a good sign. They'll hire some people, those people will spend some money, that will lead to someone else being hired, and so on."

"I made Ares twenty-five million nuyen," the beggar said.

That shut the dwarf up, and it came close to stopping Whippet in his tracks. He kept his movements slow so he could be sure to hear whatever the guy said next.

"Twenty years in assembly. Ares likes to talk about their handmade grips, and I was one of the guys doing the hand-making on the Predator. It was one of those things where the PR benefit outweighed the savings from having a machine do it, you know? Plus, I'd like to think I brought skill to the job that a machine couldn't duplicate.

"I worked that job for seventy hours a week. After five years, I got two vacation days a year. Eventually, at the end, I had a whole vacation week. I could do ten guns an hour, which meant about seven hundred a week, more than 3,500 guns per year. Sell 'em at 350 nuyen a pop, and that's about a million and a quarter per year. Twenty years on the job, you got about twenty-five million. And in all that time, they paid me less than half a million total.

"Right before my twentieth anniversary, they dumped me. Right on my ass. Wasn't a personal call, wasn't a visit from a supervisor. It was just an ARO that popped up in front of me informing me of my termination. I heard they programmed it the day they hired me. They know, see. They know when the balance kicks in, when it's cheaper to hire someone newer and less experienced and not worry about turnover costs and what you lose from inexperienced workers. That's what they cared about, that's why they fired me."

He smiled an exceptionally tired smile. "So you see, the corps aren't looking to spread anything around. More money being spent is more they're gonna keep."

Whippet almost went over to the guy to talk about the ways corps mess with you. But instead he walked on.

The troll looked at Mr. Johnson writhing on the ground.

"That seemed unnecessarily cruel." He cocked his gun. "And shooting him doesn't mean I'm not going to shoot back."

Crawdad had both his guns pointed at the troll. "Yeah, but you haven't yet."

It didn't take two blinks before the troll blasted Crawdad in the chest.

Crawdad stumbled but didn't go down. His armor vest did its job. He let loose with both his handguns, but the troll was at least as well armored, and the bullets didn't seem to do any damage.

Then headlights went on to the left of the first car, then to the right. Doors opened, feet hit the ground, and bullets hit the air. And everyone scattered.

"Ozma, what the hell?" Snipe yelled over the comm. "Seriously, what the hell?"

Ozma did not respond, and Whippet had a sinking feeling. But he didn't think about it much as he ran toward Crawdad's car.

Behind them the ground exploded. A spirit of concrete and rubble pulled itself out of the ground and flung rocks and debris here and there. Whippet heard a metallic clunk as one of the larger chunks hit the roof of the troll's car.

"Have it grab the package, Snipe," Crawdad yelled. "Have it grab the package!"

Whippet fired once, twice, three times with the Street Sweeper, turning behind him as he ran. The weapon lived up to its name, making people scatter, keeping pursuit unorganized until he reached Crawdad's car. He ran to the passenger door and yanked it open.

He felt a small amount of tension, heard the light snap as a thread broke. He screamed "Down!" as he fell to the ground.

Lucky for him the explosion was mostly on the driver's side, sending a small burst of fire out the shattered driver's side window. He still caught enough of the explosion that he had the wind knocked out of him.

He knew that the ground was a terrible place to be in this sort of situation, so he was trying to get to his feet even as he was struggling for breath. He saw one of Ozma's FlySpy drones

darting nearby. At least she'd know where he was, he thought. But that comfort went away quick when bullets hit the ground near him, spraying concrete dust into his legs.

"Crawdad, you okay?" he asked once he could breathe enough to talk.

"Damn fools need to time their explosions better," Crawdad replied. "I'm moving west, away from what used to be my fragging car."

"Okay, Ozma should have a fix on me. Ozma, can you tell me how to get to Crawdad?"

There was nothing.

"Snipe, where's Ozma?"

"She's ... frag it, she's getting into the back of the troll's car! Not kidnapped either, just strolling in safe and sound. Switch to backup channels!"

They all switched.

"Turncoat," Crawdad spat. "Last time we use someone Hoja recommends."

"Roger that," Snipe said. "Remind me to punch him in the brain next time I see him."

Whippet looked through the dark, scanning for any heat signatures. The fire blazing in Crawdad's car was causing some difficulty, which was probably part of the point. He thought he saw movement around the edges of the car, probably some members of the troll's team using it as cover.

As he got breath back, he started running. Getting clear seemed like a real good idea right now.

"Three following me," Crawdad said. "Seem to want me dead pretty bad."

"You want help?" Whippet asked.

"I wanna get paid," Crawdad said.

"Roger that," Whippet said. He didn't need any other instructions. He came to a northbound street and veered right. After a few hundred meters, he found a multi-story building that looked abandoned, and he ran in through an empty door frame. He picked his way up a crumbling staircase to the second floor, then danced over missing floorboards to get near the street. He perched near a broken window, then ducked so that the brick wall would give him some cover.

Before long, Crawdad was tearing down the street. Two people on foot were behind him, and a car turned the corner about three blocks away. Whippet would have to act fast.

He stayed out of view and counted to ten. Then he moved, going from sitting still to full speed in an inhuman instant. He extended his legs and flew out the window, becoming a guided missile aimed at one of Crawdad's pursuers.

He nailed the guy right in the chest, just like he knew he would. It should have hurt more, but his bone lacing helped take some of the sting off the blow.

The two of them rolled on the broken plascrete, which stung a little, but Whippet knew this was going to happen, and the guy he had hit did not. Which meant Whippet had a knife out faster, and he used it faster. The guy stayed down.

In the meantime, Crawdad had used the surprise of Whippet's landing to take care of the other pursuer. He did it in fine, ammo-conserving style, pummeling the guy until he fell, then kicking him, hard, when he was down.

Those two were taken care of, but the car would be on them in about five seconds.

"Block away, Snipe," Crawdad said.

It took three seconds, one more than Whippet would have preferred, but then it was there, the spirit emerging out of the ground and forming a wall for the car to smash into.

The wall wasn't entirely solid, since they didn't want everyone in the car smashed. The spirit caught the vehicle, brought it to a stop, then vanished, services fulfilled.

Whippet and Crawdad moved carefully on either side of the crashed car. Whippet could make out three sources of heat besides the machinery, two in the front, one in the back. None of them were moving.

Part of Whippet wanted to just unload his weapon into the car to make sure no one would move again, but what was left of his sense of honor prevented him. Plus, dead people don't pay.

He was about ten meters away when the person in the back moved. Even Whippet thought she moved with blinding speed, ripping through the roof of the car like it was tissue, dashing toward Whippet and moving while his Street Sweeper fired wild. She was holding something solid, and she caught him across the chest with it as she dashed by. He stepped backward three times but he didn't fall. Then he turned to engage her.

She was a marvel. He wanted her either dead or next to him on his next job. By the time he had turned, she was already moving toward him, and she had a gun out. He dove right and she missed. He fired while leaning on an elbow, which is a terrible way to shoot. He missed, and his arm hurt.

He knew he couldn't stay still, so he ran to match her. They whirled in the street, almost raising a tornado. He used the ruined vehicle as a ramp, he jumped in and out of broken windows, he leapt and pushed off walls to give him a quick change of direction. Everything he did, she matched. It was a rapier duel where they were the swords, crossing and feinting, slashing for a strike.

Then it happened. They were charging at each other from across the street, and the woman darted to her left as the first step in a wheeling-around maneuver. She must not have seen the fire hydrant near Whippet's left foot. He jumped, planted on the hydrant, pushed off, and flipped. His left arm was whirling as he flew, and it hit what it was supposed to hit, a solid blow on the head. She stumbled, and a follow up blow from his right brought her down.

Whippet didn't know what Crawdad had been up to during the fight, but then he was there, gun leveled at her head. Whippet pulled out a pistol to make doubly sure they had her covered.

She was down, bleeding and battered, but she smiled.

"Okay," she said. "What's this going to cost me?"

Whippet was still sore. Still limping. But he was looking at a line of people waiting to be used and then discarded, and at least he wasn't them. Yeah, none of them had been shot at today, they wouldn't be shot at tomorrow, or ever. But none of them had ever helped their team earn fifteen thousand nuyen by tackling someone from a second-story window. Or by landing a flipping blow on one of the fastest people he'd ever seen.

He mounted his gun on his shoulder and gave the line of corp drone wannabes a jaunty wave as he walked away from them

Screw 'em all. He was knee-deep in potato chip money, and he was going to use it.

LIFE IN THE SIXTH WORLD

It would be nice if you had all the time in the world to get your bearings in the Sixth World. If you could walk around, see the sights, and get adjusted to what life as a shadowrunner is. But you don't have that much time. There are squatters looking for whatever space you're taking up, organ harvesters interested in your still-pumping heart, and more than enough hazards to fill a handful of Daily Things That Will Kill You calendars. Plus, you have to eat, which means you need to make some money, fast. So let's talk for a bit about what you need to know, then you can get up and running to see how much more you can learn. Try to stay alive.

EVERYTHING HAS A PRICE

Read the sentence in the header there. Read it again. Got it? Good. Because if that's the only thing you take away from this, if that's the only thing you learn, then you'll still be getting something valuable about the world you live in. You walk around this world, you'll see a lot of heaps, and each one of them's got someone perched on top of it. Every megacorporation has its CEO, governments have their chief executive, gangs have their lieutenant or head man or chief head basher or whatever they hell they decide to call them. Even that one block in the barrens that has nothing more than a rusty dumpster, an abandoned car, and a shed whose roof has caved in has a scary-eyed guy named Rastool who has scared off all the other scary-eyed guys so he can claim that spot as his own. Each of them figured out what they would have to pay to get to the top of that particular heap, and each of them ponied up when the time came and paid it.

So this is what you need to know. Sure, it's nice to know history and important dates and current events and who among the glitterati is schtupping who, but let's focus on what matters: What will keep you alive, what will help you get ahead, and what you might have to pay to get what you want.

If we're going to talk about payments, we need to talk about currency. What I mean is, we need to look at the things you might need to give up in order to get ahead.

MAGIC: PAYING WITH YOUR MIND

Remember when I said it was "nice" to know important dates but not necessary? Well, I lied. There's one date everyone needs to know: December 24, 2011. That's the day the Sixth World started. According to the academicky types who like to sort things into boxes and put the boxes in order, this planet of ours has seen six ages, by which they mean six different levels of magic. The previous age, the Fifth World, was an ebb in magic. Magic was shady, disreputable, a bit slatternly, hiding out in dark corners and back alleys, very rarely coming out in the light of day. Then, on December 24, the great dragon Ryumyo flew out of Mount Fuji and darted alongside a bullet train full of very surprised commuters, pretty much putting the world on notice that the ebb was over. That was just the beginning; magic coming back meant big changes for the world.

In fact, some of the changes had kicked in months before, just nobody understood that's what was happening. They called it Unexplained Genetic Expression (UGE)—a scientificky-sounding name for children being born who looked like the elves or dwarfs of legends and folktales. Only they didn't just look the parts; the new dwarf children grew to be unnaturally strong and could see in near darkness, while the elf children had preternaturally quick reflexes and moved like dancers. For ten years these kids were freaks. Then, in 2021, they became average. That's when Goblinization struck. And it was not pretty. Where UGE had created interesting-looking newborns, Goblinization struck people of all ages. The most noticeable symptom was blinding, mind-numbing agony that came in waves. This lasted twelve to seventy-two hours while the victims changed shape, grew tusks and/or sprouted horns, and maybe quadrupled their body mass. Which is how the orks and trolls came back. Not that they'd been gone—elves and dwarfs and orks and trolls had always been here, but in the low magic ebb of the Fifth World, they'd looked just like ordinary humans.

In the wake of these changes, it became clear "humanity" was too narrow a term to cover all the types of people roaming the Earth, so now we call ourselves metahumanity. Turns out the different races don't like

each other any more now than they did in all those legends and fairytales. But we're all stuck on the same rock spinning through space, so we deal with it.

It didn't take too long for people to start trying to get a handle on how to use all the new magic floating around for themselves. Turned out some people had a knack for it. While the rest of us were wondering what they were looking at with glazed eyes and weird expressions, they were figuring out how to channel and shape streams of mana—a sort of magic energy that seems to be just about everywhere. Turns out, if you can suss how it's done, you can use mana to set the air on fire, make people do things they'd never do, or things that are truly esoteric and/or insane. And mana wasn't just for the spells and stuff we think of as magic. It gave some people the strength to punch through walls. Others can shame a cobra with their reflexes, there are some who can outrun a cheetah, and that's just scratching the surface. And you know all those magic goodies from legends and fairytales and myths? We got 'em all. Enchanted swords, magic rings, wands, amulets, mojo bags, every potion you can think of all exist. Not that they always work the way they did in the stories. Don't think you can just grab the sword of a legendary warrior and expect to slice and dice like she did, for example. But the point is, magic is out there, and people are using it. The Atlantean Foundation, the Draco Foundation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Thaumaturgy—they're regularly researching how to do the impossible with a twist of the wrist and a wink.

Now, let me be straight with you. The vast majority of us have no talent for magic, which means we're likely to look on those who do with some combination of fascination and mistrust. We love them because they can do the things we've only dreamed about, and we hate them for the exact same reason. So if you're Awakened, get used to folks eyeing you with interest and suspicion. And be ready for anyone with a gun to aim it at you first. It's the Sixth World way.

One last and very important thing you've gotta understand about magic: Dragons. They're large, they're dangerous, and they will mess you up. Ryumyo of Mount Fuji fame was the first but definitely not the last dragon to have an impact on the Sixth World; they have their claws everywhere. The great dragon Ghostwalker reigns over the divided city of Denver. The great feathered serpent Hualpa does likewise in Amazonia. A dragon named Dunkelzahn managed to get himself elected the president of the United Canadian and American States, only to get blown up on the night of his inauguration. And don't overlook the corporate dragons—Celedyr directing research at NeoNET, Rhonabwy managing a supremely massive stock portfolio, and the great dragon Lofwyr directing the largest megacorporation on Earth, Saeder-Krupp.

Which makes this a good time to talk about the megacorporations.

MEGACORPS: PAYING WITH YOUR SELF

There was a time when the highest law of any land was the decrees put down by national governments, and all bodies in national borders, individuals and corporations alike, were subject to those laws. But there was a time even before that when the only law of the world was power, and you could do what you wanted as long as you had the strength to keep anyone from stopping you (of course, history's full of evidence that this has always been the case, even when national governments held sway). The state of the Sixth World, then, isn't really anything new. It's just the latest iteration of the might-makes-right way of doing things. The only real change is that once upon a time governments were able to restrain corporations, or at least enforce some limits. Not any more.

There's a lot of legal history we could cover to help you see how we got to this point, but in the end it boils down to one word: extraterritoriality. That's the word that allows corporations to say that whatever happens in their holdings, on the buildings and lands they own, is subject to their laws—and no one else's. Gaining extraterritorial status was a long-held dream of many of the world's largest corporations, and when judicial decisions in nations across the world gave it to them, they spent several years pissing on themselves and each other in utter delirium. Then they figured out their infighting was cutting into their bottom lines, so they stopped fighting one another and concentrated on pissing on the rest of us.

Not every corporation in the world has extraterritorial status. To understand who does, you have to know about the Corporate Court, the body the megacorporations created when they realized they were spending too much time solving their disputes by ravaging entire small countries. The Corporate Court is sometimes mocked as a toothless entity, a puppet of the world's largest megacorps, but it manages—usually—to keep open warfare between the corps from breaking out, and that's at least worth something.

As part of its duties, the Court has created a ranking system to tell you how big and powerful a particular corp is. At the bottom are the unrated corps, ranging from the commlink repair business two guys named Mitch started in the back of their Ford Americar to companies that stretch from coast to coast of the world's largest nations but don't cross any borders. To get the lowest ranking the corp gives out, the A-ranking, you've got to be a multinational, doing substantive business in more than one country. And no, occasionally selling a bag of WafoCrisps to a shepherd in New Zealand doesn't count.

The next step, becoming an AA-ranked corporation, is the one that gets you the big prize of extraterritoriality. To get to this point, you've got to show that you're big in several nations, you're tough, and you can take the drek the really big boys may dish out at you when they're in a pissy mood.

Then you've got the top rank, the AAAs. The Big Ten. They're not necessarily the largest megacorporations on Earth, but their size, their diversity, and their power set them apart. That, and the fact that they somehow convinced the other megas to give them a seat on the Corporate Court. Because that's who populates the Court, justices from the Big Ten. They are the powers that shape the world, and everyone, shadowrunner or not, knows their names, because they're the centers from which nuyen flows—and where most of the nuyen normally ends up. Ares. Aztechnology. Evo. Horizon. Mitsuhama. NeoNET. Renraku. Saeder-Krupp. Shiawase. Wuxing. If you're going to be a runner for longer than ten minutes, you're going to work for one of these guys, and if you're going to live in the shadows for more than a day, you're going to

get screwed over by them. You need to know about these guys, so we've got a briefing coming up.

In the meantime, what you need to understand is that these guys are bigger than big. Think of the world's largest manufacturer of computer equipment. Then add in a powerful magic supplies broker. Throw in a few banks, an insurance firm, an entertainment conglomerate, and a snack-food giant, and you're still not a tenth of the way to forming one of the Big Ten. They employ millions of people and control trillions of nuyen. They have dozens of subsidiaries that, on their own, would be AA- or A-rated corporations. Each and every one of them owns a piece of land within one hundred kilometers of you, unless you're in the Sahara, the Amazon, or at the bottom of the ocean. And maybe even then. And each of them has convinced their employees that the safe haven they offer is worth decades of low-paying, mundane, soul-sucking work. They command the armies of the wageslaves of the world, and one way we shadowrunners know who we are is that we know we're not them. Of course, just like them, we sell our time and sometimes our lives dancing to the megacorporations' tune. They have the nuyen, and we want it, which means they determine what the rules of the game are. We just play it.

But if we're going to be different than them—stronger, faster, and dare I say better—we need an edge. A few of us are lucky enough to get that edge through magic.

For the rest of us, there are augmentations.

'WARES: PAYING WITH YOUR SOUL

Ever since the days of John Henry, we've been fighting the battle against machines, trying to prove that humanity had the upper hand on cold iron and circuitry. It took us until earlier this century to figure out that we shouldn't be trying to beat the machines; we should be joining them. Of course it all began as prosthetics—artificial legs and hands that moved like the originals, cybernetic eyes and ears that let people born blind or deaf see and hear. But pretty soon people figured out what began as medical marvels could be adapted to improve anyone's senses and abilities, and it wasn't a big jump from there to implanted phones and computers.

These days, every bit of who you are can be improved with the right piece of gear (unless you're a mage or adept—we'll talk about that in a second). Think you've got quick reflexes? You can be quicker. An artificial neural network'll make you faster than a nervous jackrabbit. Think you're strong? Switch out the muscles you were born with for a set that's been custom grown for brawn and efficiency and you'll take strong to a whole new level. Think you're charming? Implant a few sets of specialized pheromone dispensers and people will swoon when you walk by and nod enthusiastically when you talk.

And that's just for starters. You can put actual plates of armor on your skin, or lace your bones with metal so that your fists and legs deliver crushing blows. You can make your senses sharper, your brain faster, and you can implant knowledge that you never learned in school. You can replace entire pieces of your body with artificial replicas full of extra strength, nimble agility, secret compartments, and hidden weapons that provide very unpleasant surprises at just the right time.

But it's not free. And we're not just talking money; there's a higher price to pay. All this stuff is useful and great, but it's artificial. It's not metahuman, and your body knows it. Each time you get one of these augmentations, you give up a piece of yourself. You lose something inside of you, the essence of metahumanity. We don't quite understand what this "it" is, but we know this much—the more artificial you make yourself, the farther you get from actual life. If you get too far, whatever animated you is going to disappear, until all the gear you bought just collapses and becomes indistinguishable from any other pile of silicon, steel, and chrome. So go ahead and get yourself augmented up. Get those synaptic boosters, those muscle replacements, and while you're at it put a sparkling datajack in your head and some boss, day-glo nanotattoos on your face. Just understand that each time you do this, another piece of your metahumanity goes sliding away.

But wait! There's more! If you are Awakened, if you have any sort of magical mojo, you lose more than your essence. Your magic theorists, they'll tell you that mana is tied to life (which is why inanimate objects don't have an astral aura and there's no magic in deep space, but that's another subject). You take away some of the life of an Awakened person, you take away some of their power. That's why the spellslingers and adepts among us are cautious about how many augmentations they get. But they got their spells and their abilities, which means they got plenty of ways to keep up even if they aren't wired to the gills.

In the end, all this augmentations stuff comes down to a single question: How much of your metahumanity are you willing to trade for power? And that, chummer, is a question that covers way more than how many augmentations you get.

SHADOWS: PAYING WITH YOUR BLOOD

Like I said before, this is a world dominated by the megacorporations. They like things a certain way, and that way requires a docile population, a world of people who do whatever work they're told, build anything, carry anything, sacrifice anything for the mega, then spend all their money in the company store and be glad they got it so good. Sheep. That's how megacorps see metahumanity: a flock of sheep they have to keep in line to serve their purposes.

Which means the rest of us face a stark choice: Accept their shit. Or not. There are lots of ways to sell out

SINNERS AND THE SINLESS

Some of us choose the shadows, and some of us have the shadows thrust upon them. One of the dividing lines between the world of shadows and the world of light is a *SIN*—a *System Identification Number*—the identification you need to be accepted in security systems and government databases and pretty much any computer anywhere that authenticates people's identities. If you have one, you're a SINner, one of the good, normal people of the world. If you don't have one, you're an outsider. You're pushed into the shadows of the world by default.

So who is born without a SIN—who are the SINless people of the world? Well, if your parents didn't have one, you probably don't. So children of criminals, along with kids of a high percentage of orks or trolls (who often get denied SINs as a matter of course), often start off in the dark. Then there are criminals—the professional kind, the amateur ones, and the accidental ones. Whatever they did, however they got caught, they ended up with a criminal SIN, which is about as useful as a fingerless cyberhand. Most of the time, rather than staying with the norms and being treated like a radioactive leper, folks with a criminal SIN drop out of society, either running in the shadows or opting for the full-on criminal lifestyle (the mobs and street gangs of the Sixth World are always hiring).

in this world and find a corporate master who will order you around. There's garbage to be collected, floors to be swept, numbers to be added. The megas have literal mountains of menial labor to be performed in a never-ending series of twelve- or sixteen-hour shifts. Yes, it's a lot of work, but you'll have time off occasionally, and there's a whole slew of corporate-approved entertainments. You can even have relationships with other people, as long as you don't associate with anyone your beloved parent megacorporation might consider in any way unsuitable. You will never be required to be creative or inspired. You will never have to take risks. You could live, potentially, for a long time (if you're lucky enough not to contract any diseases on the corporate Do Not Treat list), and you will have approximately the same quality of life as a worker bee.

For some of us, that's not enough. That's not a life. The megacorps own enough in the world. They don't need to own us. So we drop out, stay away from the life of a corp drone, and find another way to be. We do the jobs corps don't want their regular employees to do, the things they don't want connected back to them. Espionage missions; missions of theft, sabotage, and assault—maybe assassination if you swing that way. That's the kind of work that drifts down into the shadows of the world, and that's what we pick up. That's how we survive. We still have to dance to the corporate tune to some degree—who doesn't?—but we get to live on our terms, in our way, and if we do it right and build up our skills, we can become the best at what we do and get paid what we deserve. Then, maybe, instead of being one of us, scrambling under the heels of the powerful, we can be one of them, and remake a small part of the world in our image.

No matter how each of us got into the shadows, we're here now. If we're going to survive, we have to find work. There are dozens, hundreds, thousands of jobs out there. You can make money off of them, but each one will cost you something. You'll get a scar from a bullet that should have killed you. A leg that aches in the cold because you broke it crashing your motorcycle on one of your less stylish getaways. A missing arm because you were standing just a bit too close to a bomb going off and a working cyber model is pricy. And that's just what will happen to your body. You'll be double-crossed, betrayed, and abandoned. You'll see trusted friends turn on you and watch others die. You'll have every last bit of you tested in ways you can't imagine just to see how much you can endure.

And if you succeed? If you stay alive? Money, first of all, but more. You become a legend. You join the ranks of the people we tell stories about, the shadowrunners whose names we all know. Dirk Montgomery. FastJack. Sally Tsung. The Smiling Bandit. You'll have lived your own life, survived, and even thrived. You'll have stuck it to every man the Sixth World has to offer.

As long as you can pay the price.

WHERE TO RUN

We've already established that megacorporations are more powerful than nations, but that doesn't mean nations don't have reasons to exist. For one thing, they provide convenient ways for megacorporations to divide up their activities. And while they may not be the top powers in the world, they provide infrastructure, education, law and safety for all those places not inside a megacorp's walls, and a sense of identity to their citizens—a lot of people take where they come from very seriously. So nations are still out there, and you should know some of the more important ones, if only to know what kind of identities you need to fake when traveling.

NORTH AMERICA

The formerly mighty United States and its northern neighbor Canada were hit by powerful Native American secession movements in the early part of the twenty-first century that broke apart both nations and changed the face of the continent. Perhaps the most direct heir to the old United States is the **United Canadian and American States (UCAS)**, which is com-

posed of much of the northeastern United States and southeastern Canada. The nation's capital is the old U.S. base of DeeCee, and their ideals and government constructs have deliberate similarities to the nation's predecessor. The UCAS is not as powerful as the former United States, but it's got enough economic clout and military prowess to be taken seriously. Two of the Big Ten are based in the UCAS—Ares in Detroit, and NeoNET in Boston.

The UCAS is also home to the shadowrunning capital of the world, Seattle—and yeah, I know it's not in the northeastern U.S. and southeastern Canada. It's a lump of sprawl that got carved out of the surrounding Native American Nation and given to the UCAS. Seattle's unique situation makes it an epicenter of trade and intrigue. Each of the Big Ten has a presence in the city (some more than others—NeoNET is all over the place, for example, while Renraku's presence is a pale shadow of what it used to be). You can also find the Mafia, the Yakuza, and a whole host of other organized crime outfits and street gangs. The wealthy areas of the sprawl shimmer with polished marble and gleaming gold, while the poorest areas present kilometer after kilometer of polluted land, broken buildings, and creeping terrors. It's a city of extremes, but it's the extremes of light and dark that make the shadows so extensive and deep.

The UCAS' cousin to its south is the **Confederation of American States (CAS)**. Far from being the industrial weakling it was in the days of the American Civil War, the CAS boasts a vibrant and diverse range of economic activity. Even if they don't have a homegrown AAA corp to call their own. More importantly to shadowrunners, the CAS is home to the largest independent security corporation in the world, Lone Star. If you're a shadowrunner, you've run into the officers of the Star before. If you're a *good* shadowrunner, you managed to survive the encounter alive, mostly intact, and out of prison.

Most of the rest of North America is divided between the Native American Nations, geopolitical entities created when the indigenous people decided to rise up and retake their lands. The **Pueblo Corporate Council** has the southwest (including Los Angeles, the home of Horizon), the **Sioux Nation** reigns over much of the central plains, the **Salish-Shidhe Council** governs the Pacific Northwest—surrounding Seattle—while the **Tsimshian Protectorate** and **Algonkian-Manitou Council** reside in the north. Also in North America are the uncertain **California Free State**, the recovering corporate haven of **Québec**, and the elven nation of **Tír Tairngire**.

Then there's the treaty city of **Denver**; a charming sprawl divided among five nations and ruled over by a dragon. The story of how *that* came to be will have to wait for another time. Suffice it to say there's enough intrigue in Denver to keep a very large number of shadowrunners quite busy.

GET RUNNING

The good news about shadowrunning is that there is a practically limitless number of jobs out there. The bad news is, pretty much all of them come with a chance of fatal complications. The kinds of runs you could do, and the dangers and opportunities associated with them, could fill several books, but here's a quick list to whet your appetite:

- Stealing the prototype of a new microdrone from the secured offices of Mitsuhama.
- Breaking into a secured node in the elven kingdom of Tír Tairngire to find out who the High Prince has been contacting about alleged orichalcum discoveries.
- Sneaking into a corporate enclave in Neo-Tokyo and slipping out a promising engineer with a supposedly unbreakable contract so that a competitor can make a new offer.
- Infiltrating the Congress of the United Canadian and American States to discover just who is being controlled by the mysterious, nefarious Black Lodge.
- Investigating reports of high-ranking corporate executives in Hong Kong who have been acting erratically and have vanished for days at a time.
- Exploring weaknesses in the new Matrix protocols and selling whatever you discover to the highest bidder.
- Pursuing rumors of powerful artifacts hidden in a mysterious Antarctic tower.
- Subtly—and permanently—silencing a prominent politician's second wife.
- Infiltrating the Sea Dragon's undersea lair and stealing a claw to be used by magic researchers.
- Discovering what plans the neo-anarchists of Berlin have that might upset corporate interests.
- Stopping a notorious toxic shaman believed to be hiding in the horribly polluted, quarantined Saar Special Administrative Zone.
- Finding out who was behind Aztechnology re-inserting themselves into the divided city of Denver—and then making them pay.
- Discovering just what NeoNET is doing under the heading of Project Imago.
- Breaking into the Ancients' headquarters and sending them a clear message about where elves are welcome and where they are not.

CENTRAL AMERICA

Central America is one word: **Aztlan**. And Aztlan is one word: Aztechnology. The nation is basically a division of the megacorp. So if you have no problems with Aztechnology, then you've got no problems with Aztlan. If you've managed to piss off the Big A, it's probably best to stay off their home ground, as they've got eyes everywhere. The nation stretches from its border with Texas on the north all the way down to Amazonia in the south. The Corporate Court controls the Panama Canal, and the Yucatan is ... complicated.

SOUTH AMERICA

There are a number of nations down here, but the only one with a significant global profile is **Amazonia**. Ruled over by the ecologically minded dragon Hualpa, Amazonia is one place where the corps are secondary to the nation. Though after the spanking Aztlan just gave Amazonia in a recent war, the megas might be looking to flex a little more muscle down there, because Hualpa might find himself looking for some new investment.

ASIA

Imperial Japan boasts the greatest concentration of megacorporate headquarters in the world. Mitsuhama, Renraku, and Shiawase all make their home here, and a new spirit of cooperation between the three of them threatens to make life difficult for the other megas of the world. Citizens of Japan take great pride in their Imperial government and their homegrown megacorps. They are less happy about the non-human metatypes in their midst, though the general populace has grown more accepting in recent years.

Wuxing is based in the independent city of **Hong Kong**. Hong Kong is a very business-friendly sprawl, in pretty much the same way the Old West town of Tombstone was a very gunfighter-friendly town. It's great to be at the top or on the way up, but if you lose a competition in that sprawl, you lose hard. All of which makes Hong Kong very friendly to our brand of business; the

megacorporations make or take any advantage they can to ensure they don't come out the losers.

While it's been divided into several nations, **Russia** has managed to hold on to a winding stretch of land connecting its western section to the eastern coast on the Sea of Japan. The city of Vladivostok hosts the headquarters of Evo, making it one of the world's leading technological centers.

EUROPE

The **Allied German States**, specifically the sprawl of Essen, is home to the largest megacorporation in the world, Saeder-Krupp. It's also hosted some of the worst ecological disasters in the past century, but we're sure that's just a coincidence. The pollution in the area, along with other corporate abuses, has made the AGS in general, and Berlin in particular, a hotbed of neo-anarchist activity and other megacorporate resistance.

France, **Spain**, **Portugal**, the **United Kingdom**, **Poland**, and other European nations go about their business as normal, while the **Balkans** remain a seat of chaos and confusion. Plus ça change and all that.

AFRICA

Northern Africa has seen **Egypt** grow both west and south, though **Algeria**, **Tunisia**, **Sheba**, and the **Ethiomalian Territories** currently are holding it at bay. The **Kingdoms of Nigeria** are divided among various tribes looking to position themselves to get a piece of the oil revenue flowing through the nation. The ghoul kingdom of **Asamando** in west Africa is one of the most controversial nations of the world; some see it as a leader in the struggle for ghoul rights, while others take exception to the fact that metahumans are regularly and deliberately fed to the diseased populace of the land. The Nairobi sprawl in **Kenya** is home to the Kilimanjaro Mass Driver, which is playing a growing role in promoting space travel. The nation of **Azania** has taken over much of the southern part of the continent, and while cultural divisions keep threatening to pull it apart, the money flowing in from its industrial might holds it together.

AUSTRALIA AND OCEANIA

Long a center of unique and strange wildlife, the **Australian Republic** got even weirder after the Awakening. The Outback is regularly swept by mana storms, making it more dangerous than ever to cross. Many parazoologists make the attempt, though, because they know there are critters out there that have yet to be catalogued. The island of **Tasmania**, meanwhile, seems to have become a living organism, using its plant growth and animal life to quickly demolish anything metahumans try to construct.

Perhaps the hottest spot in the area is **New Guinea**. Australia tried to annex it in 2064, and they met resistance from the prime minister—who promptly disappeared. Since then it has functioned as a part of Australia, but in recent years anti-Republic resistance has been growing, meaning there are plenty of politically oriented shadowruns in the area.

A DAY IN YOUR LIFE

So now you've got some idea how to make yourself strong enough and fast enough and maybe smart enough to do what you need or want to do, and you've got a snapshot of a few places you might want to do it. Now let's talk about what really matters to you—your life in the Sixth World. We'll start with the people you'll encounter, in particular the ones you should seek out.

PEOPLE YOU KNOW

If you're going to make it as a shadowrunner, there are four types of people you need to know. First is **other runners**. Yeah, you're great—you got the talent, you got the moves, you do everything better than anyone else—but what you can't do is everything *by* yourself. You may have drek-hot Matrix skills, but you'll need some magic surveillance to help keep you safe. Or you may be an ace at long-range weapons, but could really use a tank who can charge in and do some serious damage in melee situations. The point is: To be effective, you need a team. Ask around, do some trial runs, and find some people you trust. Your team is going to be the only thing standing between you and death on a number of occasions, so you need to be able to count on each one of them. That doesn't mean they need to be normal, likable, or even entirely sane. They just need to be there when it counts.

The second group is **contacts**. We understand if you're not a people person—for a lot of us, being called an "anti-social psychopath" would be an upgrade. But there are people we run into. There's the girl at the corner bar who's as good with the tap as she is with a shotgun. The weapons dealer who always calls you first when a new shipment hits the black market. The owl-eyed guy who runs the odds-and-ends shop that occasionally carries powdered snow moose horn, which is extremely useful in alchemy. The Lone Star lieutenant who once let you skate on a pick-pocketing charge because you had a nice face. All these people and more have two important qualities: First, they won't immediately shoot you on sight; and second, they're in a position to know useful information. Whether it's who's hiring and for what, where someone trying to keep a low profile might have gone to ground, new and interesting infestations of security types, or other bits of data you didn't know you needed to know, what

your contacts can tell you is an indispensable part of your life. So treat them nice.

If you're just starting out with one of your contacts and you don't have much work on the horizon, the first thing you need to ask about is a **fixer**. These are the guys who know who's out there on the street, what jobs need to be done, and how to put those two things together to get the right people doing the right things. A lot of the time fixers have specialties—you'll get one who's a source of corporate jobs, another who's in with the Mafia and knows what they're hiring for, and so on. So shop around until you find a fixer who specializes in the kind of work you want to do. And who won't hook you up with someone you just finished screwing over.

Understand that if you haven't been on the streets long and you don't have any successful jobs under your belt, you can't expect the fixer to throw you the plum jobs. So forget about bodyguarding some CEO's daughter while she goes to the mall; you gotta work up to that. But there's still plenty of work out there for you, from getting in the middle of ferocious gang fights to stealing corporate prototypes to tracking down stray rich kids who got themselves lost in the urban barrens. Prove yourself on the first job your fixer gives you, and there will be more to come.

This brings us to the fourth person you need to know, the person who will tell you what it is you're being hired to do and how much you're going to be paid to do it. We call this person **Mr. Johnson**, because that's what he calls himself. Sure, in Japan he sometimes calls himself Mr. Tanaka, in the Allied German States he's Herr Schmidt, and in Hong Kong he might go by the name Mr. Wu, but you don't need to remember all that. All you need to know is that you're not supposed to know his real name, he'll be the one telling you the details of your mission, and there's a good chance that, one way or another, he's going to screw you over.

The number of ways Mr. Johnson can screw you could fill a book bigger than this one. The simplest, and most common, is not telling you everything you need to know. Mr. Johnson is in the secrecy business, after all, so there's always going to be something he wants to hide. He also might be screwing you over in a more deliberate fashion—sending you into a trap, having you chase after something that doesn't really exist, that sort of thing. Mr. Johnson is inventive. What is it the diplomats say? "Trust, but verify"? And when a journalist's mother says she loves him, he gets it confirmed by three sources before he believes. Shadowrunners consider both groups to be suicidally naïve; they've dealt with Mr. Johnson.

DOING THE DIRTY WORK

Okay. All your asking around and making friends has paid off—your fixer has a job for you. Now what? There is no one shape for shadowruns to take. They all look different. They start different, they end different, and they get from their various Points A to their final Points Z in a multitude of fashions. Still, despite this, there are basic steps that show up in most runs, and knowing them reduces the chance of being pegged as the uninformed newb you are when you're starting out.

THE MEET

Nothing's going to happen unless you know what you're supposed to do, and you're not going to do anything—we hope—unless you know how much you're going to get paid. The meet is where you work out these basic terms. Pay attention to every little bit of the meet when it happens, because every detail can tell you something. Is Mr. Johnson meeting you in person, or over the Matrix? Is he astrally glowing with sustained spells? Did he arrange to meet you in a posh restaurant, a skeevy nightclub, or some dive bar in the barrens? Is he dressed to match his surroundings, or does he look out of place? And, perhaps most important, is he willing to pick up the tab for anything you decide to eat or drink during the meet?

Watch carefully, listen closely, and use everything you absorb during the meet to inform your job. And wrangle every last nuyen out of Mr. Johnson. You're not going to get too many other chances to bargain, so use this one well.

WHY TO MEET WHERE

1. **Private room in a nightclub.** Provides the seclusion you want, doesn't have a strong dress code, and has a crowd nearby to keep the participants honest.
2. **Secured Matrix site.** You can't shoot what's not physically near you. Dumpshock is a risk, maybe, but if you're worried about it, don't go in with hot-sim. The problem is that you're not going to be able to get much of a read off Mr. Johnson's body language or facial expressions.
3. **Office in an abandoned warehouse.** The upside is, it's plenty isolated and private. The downside is, it's plenty isolated and private. Too many people have walked into meets in places like this and not come out. Plus, the amenities are non-existent.
4. **Hotel room.** You don't want Mr. Johnson to know where you're staying, he doesn't want you to know where he's staying. So motel rooms are anonymous and private—which can be the same good/bad thing as the abandoned warehouse, though things usually stay less violent in hotel rooms. Not always, but usually. And you get room service. Unless you're at some no-tell motel, though some of those offer an array of services that your nicer establishments can't match.
5. **Fancy restaurant.** Privacy and discretion are guaranteed at these spots, and you might even get real meat. Just remember that sometimes Mr. Johnson is watching the tab you run up like he's your parent, making sure you don't spend too recklessly. Every part of every meet is a kind of test.

LEGWORK

Whether you're going to snatch a middle manager from a secured office, find a missing corporate scion hidden in a Yakuza compound, or break into a Matrix node to find a hidden piece of paydata, the first thing you want to do is get the lay of the land, whatever that land might be. Check out floor plans, learn about security details, piece together the daily routines of the people involved, find out what the networks and IC are like where you'll be going, scope out the area on the astral plane, and check around with the kind of people who know stuff to find out who else might be interested in what you're doing and if there are some things you should know that Mr. Johnson either didn't know or didn't bother to tell you. No bullets are usually fired in this stage, no one is punched in the face, and sometimes, shockingly, no laws are broken, but make no mistake—this is where you can make or break your run. The more you know, the more you can anticipate, and the more likely you are to stay one step ahead. Ahead of whom? Ahead of everybody else; that's how runners stay alive.

THE PLAN

I knew a few runners who loved to wing it—get into the action, handle things on the fly and make the next move up as they ran. I visit their tombstones every year.

Look, there's room for creativity in a run, especially when things happen that you don't expect, but the best runners know what they're going to do when they go in. So plan. Know who does what and when they do it. And who does it if the runner supposed to do it goes down. Have a second option for each decision point. Have a foolproof communications plan. Have a backup communications plan for the foolproof one. Know where you're going to meet if things go pear-shaped. Know how you're going to pay for funeral expenses should the need arise.

DO IT

Some people say the most successful missions are the ones where you get in, get out, and don't fire a shot. Others say that you should go big, go loud, and always be ready to make an impression. The point is, you have a wide range of options. You don't have to do things one particular way, but you have to *do* them. Get in there, carry out your plan, deal with the inevitable unanticipated obstacles, then see who's left standing at the end.

WRAP IT UP

Unless Mr. Johnson is a total fool, you didn't get your entire pay in advance. So connect with him however you were supposed to, deliver whatever goods or proof of activities you were supposed to, then collect the remainder of your pay. And a bonus, if you can wrangle one.

WHAT YOU MIGHT BE DOING

The types of jobs there are in the world are almost as numerous as the shadowrunners wanting to do them. But if we put a little brainpower into organization, we can narrow the types of jobs you might be hired to do down to the following basic types:

Datasteal: Whether it's plans for a new sonic weapon, information on a corporate manager's private life, or details of Pathfinder Multimedia's trideo productions over the next year, data can equal power. So shadowrunners are often sent to snatch data; paydata—the kind worth something to someone.

Burglary: Sometimes information needs to be stolen, and sometimes it's actual stuff. It may be a racing motorcycle prototype (call me if you get that job—I want in), an artifact stored away in some museum, a corporate exec's left shoe, an eye, or something truly esoteric. Whatever it is, it's not easy to get, which is why someone's willing to pay you to go fetch. Sometimes this requires subtlety and stealth; misdirection, subterfuge, impeccable timing, and nuanced moves. Other times you bust in, grab what you want, then run like hell.

Breaking shit: Sometimes you've got to break a newshound's car to remind him what he could lose if he keeps making waves. Sometimes you've got to burn a politico's house down to inspire her to go into seclusion and contemplate her life choices. Sometimes you might have to break parts of an ambitious executive's body, like his head (what we call "wetwork"), to encourage more teamwork and less independent entrepreneurialism. Destruction, in all its glorious forms, is a standard part of shadowrunning. You just have to decide how much destruction you're willing to live with.

Extraction or insertion: In the old days, corporations would get into bidding wars to win the rights to employ hot talents in all sorts of fields, including engineers, researchers, actors, and even corporate managers. That was before corporations got the leverage they have now. These days, the megacorps have large legal departments and considerable security devoted to making sure people stay in place, employed for life by the same boss. Which means you can't just wave money at an employee if you want to hire them; instead, you've got to get them out of where they are. Extractions of valuable personnel, and then insertions of those people into their new corporate homes, are a regular part of the shadowrunning biz.

Delivery: Prostitution may be the world's oldest profession, but delivery boy has got to be right behind it. Sometime after clubs but before fire, humans invented point A and point B, and they needed someone to get their stuff from one to the other. It's been that way ever since. Shadowrunners, of course, are not hired to deliver soykaf lattes and bagels to the morning faculty

meeting. Instead, we get jobs like making sure a vial of dragon blood gets to the right enchanter or delivering a sample of the newly synthesized narcotic to the Mafia's labs for chemical analysis or, always a favorite, take a thing they don't want to tell you about to a person they don't want to identify. As you might guess, there's a little more than travel going on here. There will be people who want whatever it is you're carrying—or want it back—and there's a good chance they'll come after you while you're in transit. Stay sharp, move fast, and don't drop anything important. Oh, and make sure all your papers are in order, because "delivery" usually means "smuggling," which means transit docs with all the right clearances that look good enough to get you across borders.

Protection: Just like runners are hired to jack data, steal stuff, break things, and extract people, runners are hired to stop runners from jacking, stealing, breaking, and extracting. Sometimes the employer thinks runners are the best defense against runners; other times the employer needs expendable assets she can plausibly deny knowing anything about. Protection can be bodyguarding, defending, checking an area out for traps and ambushes, or tracking down and neutralizing threats. The important thing is to be as good as you say you are.

Hooding: The world might try to beat it out of us, but some runners hold on to a streak of idealism. They favor jobs that hurt the rich and powerful and help everyone else. It may be as simple as stealing cash or precious goods and redistributing them, but it can also be more sophisticated. Remind me to tell you sometime about the guys who broke into a Mitsuhama research facility and got all the royalties in perpetuity for a new gizmo assigned to the residents of the 178th Street Clinic and Shelter.

Misdirection: Okay, back in the day, before magic became a real thing, there were people who called themselves magicians who were anything but. They ran a kind of confidence game that lasted just long enough for you to believe their act. Their tools were mechanisms or constructions that did or hid more than you'd expect, sleight of hand, and the art of getting the audience to watch the wrong thing. They'd make broad, flamboyant gestures with one hand while making the one actually doing the trick look like it's holding still or look dull and uninteresting as their beautiful assistants wiggle and strut, doing their thing while your eyes were elsewhere. In misdirection jobs, you get to be the waving hand or the dancing sideshow, keeping the attention of law enforcement or other runner teams away from whatever important drek is going down. Of course, all that attention is seldom admiring and it's unlikely any of the watchers have your best interests at heart, so be ready to be creative and fast on your feet.

THE OPPOSITION

We talked before about the people you should know because they'll help. Now we'll look at the other side of the equation. Some of the people here will hire you, some of them will work against you, but make no mistake—they're all the opposition. They've got resources you want, or are living the life you're looking for, or in some other way are competing with you for whatever is out there. You're going to run into them, so the more you understand them, the more likely you are to thrive. Or, when you're just starting out, a better chance of staying alive.

THE CORPS

Most of your runs will be jobs that will wrap you all up in corporate interests, so we'll start there. That's not to say that every megacorp has its hand in every shadowrun, or that every corp sponsoring a run is one of the almighty ones with infinitely deep pockets. There are corporations and there are corporations. The little corporations are small enough to be barely worth the notice of the big fish in the pond. The thing about the little guys is, well, they're not that big. That means that they're trying to protect pretty much everything they have going for them. If you go up against a tiny corp, you may not encounter the armies that the megas can throw up against you, but you'll be facing anoth-

ARES MACROTECHNOLOGY

Corporate Court Ranking (2075): #7
Corporate Slogan:
"Making the World a Safer Place"
Corporate Status:
AAA, public corporation
World Headquarters: Detroit, UCAS
President/CEO: Damien Knight

AZTECHNOLOGY

Corporate Court Ranking (2075): #4
Corporate Slogan:
"The Way to a Better Tomorrow"
Corporate Status:
AAA, private corporation
World Headquarters: Tenochtitlán, Aztlan
President/CEO: Flavia de la Rosa

EVO CORPORATION

Corporate Court Ranking (2075): #6
Corporate Slogan:
"Changing Life"
Corporate Status:
AAA, public corporation
World Headquarters: Vladivostok, Russia
President: Yuri Shibanokuji

er weapon that can be just as dangerous as bullets or spells: desperation.

It's the big corps with the AAA rating that are the big time when it comes to shadowrunning. Most often, you'll be running against subsidiaries, outlying assets, or plausibly deniable facilities outside of main corporate territories. Once in a while, you'll find yourself on a run directly against one of the Big Ten.

Know this: The megas don't care about you. If you're somewhere you're not supposed to be, they'll try to kill you. They'll tear into you with lead, spirits, spells, IC, and anything else handy that they can throw at you. And that's the sugar-coated version. They're ready for anything, and they're ready to give better than they get.

Like the dead Chinese guy said, you should know your enemy. So if you don't know about the Big Ten, allow me to introduce you.

THE BIG TEN

There are ten megacorps that have a AAA rating from the Corporate Court (hell, they *are* the Corporate Court). They have all the gold, so they make the rules, and you need to know the basics about them if you want to make it in the shadows.

ARES MACROTECHNOLOGY

Most shadowrunners know Ares from their Ares Arms division, and with good reason. The Ares Predator is the staple sidearm for the discerning runner. Run by wealthy playboy Damien Knight, the corp has a reputation as a very "American" outfit: gung-ho, militaristic, patriotic, and individualistic—Mom and apple pie, in other words. Don't let that fool you—sure, they're one of the better megas to work shadow ops for, but keep your eyes open, because they can be as underhanded as the rest. Ares specializes in law enforcement, military hardware and arms, aerospace (they have five orbital habitats), entertainment, automotive (the former General Motors is also part of the Ares family), and smaller divisions in many other areas.

AZTECHNOLOGY

If you've bought any kind of consumer goods recently, chances are you've contributed to Aztechnology's bottom line. Sixty percent of the goodies you find at your local Stuffer Shack (ninety percent if you count the Stuffer Shack itself) come from the Big A. They make everything from chemicals to trideo-game software to military goods and magical supplies. They've got their fingers in more pies than just about any other mega, and their public relations campaigns are second to none. Which is good, because they're also all about blood magic and evil conspiracies. Allegedly. Just don't say anything about that within earshot of the Big A's ferocious legal team.

EVO CORPORATION

"EVOlve," they say in all their ads. Let's be fair, they are a megacorp that looks to the future. Their CEO is an ork and their largest stockholder is a free spirit. They focus a lot on transhumanist projects ranging from bioware cybernetics, anti-aging experiments, and other even more out-there projects designed to take metahumanity to the next stage of evolution. On top of that,

HORIZON GROUP

Corporate Court Ranking (2075): #10
Corporate Slogan: "We Know What You Think"
Corporate Status: AAA, private corporation
World Headquarters: Los Angeles, PCC
President/CEO: Gary Cline

MITSUHAMA COMPUTER TECHNOLOGIES

Corporate Court Ranking (2075): #3
Corporate Slogan: "The Future is Mitsuhama"
Corporate Status: AAA, public corporation
World Headquarters: Kyoto, Japanese Imperial State
President/CEO: Toshiro Mitsuhama

NEONET

Corporate Court Ranking (2075): #2
Corporate Slogan: "Tomorrow Runs on NeoNET"
Corporate Status: AAA, public corporation
World Headquarters: Boston, UCAS
CEO: Richard Villiers

RENRAKU COMPUTER SYSTEMS

Corporate Court Ranking (2075): #5
Corporate Slogan: "Today's Solutions to Today's Problems"
Corporate Status: AAA, public corporation
World Headquarters: Chiba, Japanese Imperial State
CEO: Inazo Aneki (Honorary)

they're the first megacorp to successfully set up a base on Mars. Evo leads the megas in goods and services designed with orks, trolls, elves, dwarfs, changelings, and other nonhuman people in mind. Their corporate culture is pretty touchy-feely, but don't freak—they can be as cold and calculating as any other mega.

HORIZON GROUP

Horizon is based in the midst of media wonderland Los Angeles, and they've managed to score many exclusive contracts for dealing with the development of California. With charismatic ex-simstar Gary Kline at the helm, Horizon specializes in anything that can be used to manipulate opinion (media, advertising, entertainment, social networking, etc.), along with consumer goods and services, real estate and development, and pharmaceuticals. Its corporate culture is "people-centered," and employees are well taken care of and encouraged to develop their talents and pursue their interests on company time—as long as the corp reaps the profits. They had been renowned as being technomancer friendly, but a series of events culminating in a massacre in Las Vegas helped people understand that even the nicest of megacorps can spin out of control.

MITSUHAMA COMPUTER TECHNOLOGIES

This Japanacorp is all about the computers. Robotics, heavy industry, you name it—but it's less well known that they're one of the biggest manufacturers of magical goods around. There's a rumor going around that they're in bed with the Yakuza (who am I kidding, they're all over each other). In any case, they've established quite a presence in North America over the last few years. The corp pays very well for success in shadowruns, but when you fail they ... disapprove. Be extra careful when you're running against them, because their "zero-zone" policy of shooting first and shooting more later usually means failed runners get geeked.

NEONET

NeoNET is the primary power behind the Grid Overwatch Division, and they practically invented the wireless Matrix. Needless to say, they're heavily invested in Matrix infrastructure, along with cyberware, electronics, software, biotech, aerospace, small arms, and many others. As a corporation, NeoNET is pretty fractured, with the major factions controlled by a long-time corporate raider, a reclusive dwarf, and the great dragon Celedyr. Runs for or against NeoNET are a grab-bag, all the time. Randomness can be fun, until that time you end up reaching in the bag and grabbing a scorpion.

RENRAKU COMPUTER SYSTEMS

Renraku controls the world's largest data repository and they own almost all of Asia's local grids. And when nobody knows what kind of useful (or incriminating) information you've got squirreled away in your datastores, it's going to take some strong motivation to risk messing with you. They've got a seriously traditional Japanese culture, and their Red Samurai military units are universally feared. Not respected, *feared*.

SAEDER-KRUPP HEAVY INDUSTRIES

Saeder-Krupp Heavy Industries can be summed up in one word: Lofwyr. The great dragon owns nearly one hundred percent of this German-based megacorp,

SAEDER-KRUPP HEAVY INDUSTRIES

Corporate Court Ranking (2075): #1
Corporate Slogan: "One Step Ahead"
Corporate Status: AAA, private corporation
World Headquarters: Essen, Allied German States
President/CEO: Lofwyr

SHIAWASE CORPORATION

Corporate Court Ranking (2075): #8
Corporate Slogan: "Advancing Life"
Corporate Status: AAA, public corporation
World Headquarters: Osaka, Japanese Imperial State
President/CEO: Korin Yamana

WUXING INCORPORATED

Corporate Court Ranking (2075): #9
Corporate Slogan: "We're Behind Everything You Do"
Corporate Status: AAA, public corporation
World Headquarters: Hong Kong, Free Enterprise Enclave
President: Wu Lung-Wei

and he rules it with the kind of attention to detail that only one of his kind can maintain. It's not impossible to put one over on Lofwyr, but it's very difficult—and usually fatal. The wyrm doesn't suffer fools gladly, and shadowrunners who go against him (or fail in one of his jobs) might just find themselves on his list—which is probably also his lunch menu. S-K is primarily involved in heavy industry, chemicals, finance, and aerospace with a presence in many other areas, which is just what you'd expect from the largest corporation in the world.

SHIAWASE CORPORATION

The oldest of the megas, Shiawase was the first corp to claim extraterritorial status. A classic Japanese zaibatsu, Shiawase is run in a traditional "family" style, with most employees signing lifetime contracts and even marrying within the corp. Families, however, tend to squabble, and plenty of runners have made good cash in the course of these quarrels. As for what they do, what don't they do? Either directly or through subsidiaries, Shiawase has its hands in nuclear power, environmental engineering, biotech, heavy industry, technical service, minerals, military goods, and a whole lot more.

WUXING INCORPORATED

The only Chinese player on the megacorp scene, Wuxing owns a sizeable chunk of the Pacific rim. The corporation is quiet and conservative, the stealthiest of the Big Ten. Their employees are steeped in Chinese culture, even those who've never been within a thousand clicks of Asia. Traditionally focused on finance and shipping concerns, Wuxing also specializes in magical services and goods, vying for the top spot of most mystic megacorp. Wuxing has also expanded heavily into other markets, including agriculture, engineering, consumer goods, and chemicals.

ORGANIZED CRIME

A lot of shadowrunners will tell you the only real difference between what we do and organized crime is the organized part. There's some truth in that. Shadowrunners have occasionally formed organizations, like the legendary Assets, Inc., but as a rule it's not something we do. People like us, we don't take orders well. We don't like to share with anyone outside of our team (or often inside it, for that matter), not to

LEADING NORTH AMERICAN ORGANIZED CRIME GROUPS

The O'Malley syndicate (Mafia): Dona Rowena O'Malley runs all things Mafia in Seattle, simultaneously controlling the Finnigan, Gianelli, and Ciarniello families. She ascended to that position with managerial acumen, effective leadership skills, and a dead-cold ruthless streak that takes no prisoners. Now that she has the Gianellis and Ciarniellos working for her instead of against her, she is working to secure her territory against anyone thinking they deserve a piece of Seattle.

The Shotozumi-rengo (Yakuza): Led by Oyabun Hanzo Shotozumi of Seattle, this rengo has a presence in most major North American cities. For the most part local groups act independently of each other, but they all seek out the wisdom of their oyabun and listen when he speaks. Questions have been raised—okay, murmured—as to Hanzo's ability to deal with the pressures he's under on so many fronts: a newly aggressive capa di capi in Seattle; epic *Sturm und Drang* involving a great dragon and unruly invading forces in Denver; and impatient, ambitious underlings in his own organization murmuring questions about his ability to deal. In particular, Oyabun Honjowara of New Jersey is rumored to be building a power base of his own, and smart money's betting he'll make a play for the top spot in the rengo in the not-too-distant future.

Large Circle League (Triad): Maybe not as powerful as some of their Southeast Asian counterparts, the Large Circle League of New York City is more potent than a lot of people realize. They've used the Manhattan Development Consortium to their advantage and infiltrated many corporations, especially Shiawase. They use the information they gather as leverage. Nothing too overt, mostly just guiding and/or pushing events in that corporate-controlled sprawl in ways they want them to go. They have a more overt and ongoing battle with the local Mafia lately over control of the sprawl's drug trade.

Povryejhda (Vory): Led by Andrei Petschukov (nickname: Terminator), this Seattle branch of the Vory is chock-full of Russian loyalists and a fair number of Red Army personnel. They have built something—or are up to something, depending on who you talk to—on a large piece of land they acquired near Puyallup. No one knows what that something or somethings is because they've surrounded their property with a massive wall and backed it up with a pretty impressive astral barrier. What's happening in there is anyone's guess—and there's plenty of guessing going on.

The Outer Circle (Koshari): The leaders of Koshari circles in Santa Fe, Phoenix, Denver, and Las Vegas work together, divvying up territory and business and making sure no one steps on anyone else's toes. They also regulate where and how far smaller operations can expand. Right now elements in Los Angeles are flexing and agitating; they think it's time the big four became the big five.

mention regimentation, hierarchical organization, and all that lock-step discipline are pretty much poison to us. Organized crime, on the other hand, thrives on that stuff. Organized crime does the things large numbers of people do well: deals narcotics and other addictives; runs protection rackets; operates gambling rings—just about anything that requires an army and turns a profit. This means organized crime can often be found deeply entwined with legitimate, respected businesses. In some cases it's hard to tell where the crime ends and the business begins.

Despite their violent reputations, the organizations that make up organized crime eschew pyrotechnics whenever possible. Firefights bring police attention and could result in important people getting killed or otherwise indisposed. As a general rule, the work they do goes better when no one is looking, so they put a lot of effort into keeping a low profile. But don't be confused—and don't get stupid. Just because they'd rather keep their guns holstered and the money flowing, don't think for a minute they won't get down and dirty when they need to.

The **Mafia** is an extensive and significant presence in every major North American city, most European cities, and a lot of cities everywhere else. They like cities. They usually don't work closely with the megacorporations because, let's face it, they *are* a megacorporation. The main difference between the recognized corps and the Mafia is that when there's infighting between Mafia's divisions, it's slightly more likely to involve high body counts.

The **Yakuza**, by contrast, have tied their fortunes to Mitsuhama Computer Technologies. This is not to say that every Yakuza rengo has a connection to Mitsuhama—they don't, and some rengos fight tooth and nail against those who do. But the Yakuza and MCT are inextricably tied together. As in four high-ranking Yakuza between them own about forty-five percent of the megacorporation. Mitsuhama uses Yakuza foot soldiers to do their dirty work, while the Yakuza uses MCT as the greatest money-laundering organization the world has ever seen. The corporate association gives the Yakuza a ruthless efficiency; anyone who deals with them watches their manners.

The **Triads** have their origins in what used to be China and differ from the other major crime networks in that they are decentralized—they have no central leadership, no supreme commander or high council or arbitration committee. This can mean a whole new set of protocols when you move from one Triad's turf to another; what kept you alive in one place might kill you in the next. Their lack of central leadership means conflict resolution within the Triads is often bloody and brutal—though they are capable of considerable restraint and finesse if the situation calls for it. The lack of central control also makes them more flexible in adapting to—and taking over—new territories. If they ever got over their cultural prejudice against women in authority and non-human metatypes in general they'd own a lot bigger piece of the pie. The Triads have the usual gambling, drugs, and prostitution operations, of course, but their specialty is Awakened drugs. For some reason the Triads attract a disproportionate percentage of mages, which makes them very efficient at finding, testing, and preparing the drugs with the best street value.

Remember when I told you organized crime liked to keep a low profile, avoid the spotlight, and keep attention off itself? I was not talking about the Russian **Vory v Zakone**. They can't match the money and manpower of the other major syndicates, so their primary public relations tool is intimidation. Their go-to negotiation technique is blunt brutality; the first indication the Vory have entered a new area is usually the bodies of criminals who thought it was their turf. The Vory want to shake things up, they hit every confrontation at a full charge, loud and raging. It doesn't always work, but I'll tell you this—no one ever likes to see these guys coming.

In the Hopi tradition, Koshare is the spirit of overdoing things—gluttonous, disruptive, and irreverent, the universal cautionary example. Koshare does all the things people should not do, illustrating why they should never do them. Which is why the network of Native American organized crime rings call themselves the **Koshari**. They do all the things you would expect an organized crime outfit to do, but they're especially skilled at talislegging, the illicit smuggling of magical reagents and telesma. If you're a t-bird pilot in the western half of North America, depending on the impression you make on the Koshari, you'll either be recruited, warned off their territory, or shut down hard.

GANGS

We don't have the room or the time to fill you in on all the gangs that are banging around whatever sprawl you're sitting in right now. Small places seem to get by with just one gang, but get much over two thousand locals and you're probably going to have two or more. Over a million locals and you're talking a healthy gang network. You should take the time to figure out that network—doing one gang's work on another's turf is more likely to get you killed if you don't know that's what you're doing.

There are two types of gangs, and by and large as a runner you're most likely to come across some flavor of the many **street gangs**. Street gangs are all about territory. A few broken blocks, a handful of abandoned buildings, the streets around their favorite dive, fifteen different piles of brick, a neighborhood, you name it. Whatever they've got, it's theirs. They don't always know what to do with it—maybe deal minor drugs or run half-assed protection rackets—but they'll defend it against all comers. Which usually means hanging out and challenging anyone they don't know to a fight. There are street gangs that aren't all about the territory. Some gangs are racially based, like Seattle's elf-only Ancients; some are bound together by a common interest, like the Halloweeners,

who dress up like ghouls to terrify and assault civilians unfortunate enough to cross their path. As a general rule gangers are young, raw, untrained, unpredictable, quick-tempered, and eager to mix things up. So yeah, if the needs of whatever job you're on do not require you to deal with them, avoid gangs. Unless you think your evening would be much improved by a fistfight.

What street gangs do to a collection of sprawl blocks, **go-gangs** do to highways. Riding around on souped-up cycles and choppers, these gang members look for any driver who shows a milligram of fear. The least hesitation, such as looking like you're thinking things over, can trigger an attack. This could be a ram, or it could be a game of head-on chicken against a foe with a sawed-off shotgun propped on his handlebar. There's no point to their attacks—the attack *is* the point. They are random, indiscriminate, and leap to violence the way a frog leaps to water. Know where the go-gangs are and avoid them.

ACADEMICS

All right, this may seem odd. We're not known for hanging around in classrooms much or being on the cutting edge of academic research. But academics have their uses. They invariably have schools of business, which can provide you with all sorts of corporate information that PR flacks aren't willing to share. And if you're looking for any sort of historical information—about the Matrix and technology, about politics and nations, about magic and spell formulae—academics know more than the common man about a wide range of topics. And universities teach languages—if you need something translated, check them out. A university makes a good first choice when looking for their kind of data; compared to their corporate counterparts, profs are surprisingly low budget.

Generally speaking, universities come in three flavors: public, private nonprofit, and private for-profit. That last one is the most common, as the corps like to send their people through their own institutions; it's a quality control issue—corps want people who see the world the way they do, undistracted by contrary data or plagued by independent thoughts. Most public universities are hanging on by a thread. Government budgets are tight and it's hard to justify funding schools when public perception is that they only serve students the megacorps didn't want. It's like there's a stigma attached to anyone trying to better themselves on their own, which sounds a lot like megacorp PR. Despite that, some public universities remain well-respected bastions of learning, insofar as anyone cares about that drek. The University of Washington in Seattle is one notable example.

Private nonprofit universities provide a resource for students who have what corps want but have managed to make their way without committing to any of them. Yet. Many of the private nonprofits don't just survive, they thrive—such as the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Thaumaturgy and CalTech. Which brings us to the next category.

MANA CHASERS

Whenever anything new hits the world, two things happen in short order. First, someone figures out how to make money off of it; and second, someone figures out how to use it for porn. So it is with magic. We're going to focus on the first one, but yeah—magic's used for porn, just like everything else.

Aside from the business of wage mages we talked about before, there are a number of other ways to generate money from magic, because wherever the money is, that's where we should be. Researching and developing new spell formulae is a big one. There are a number of wealthy spellslingers out there, and they're generally willing to lay down a nice pile of cash for something that will give them a competitive advantage over their peers. There's also a lot of money to be made in the area of magical reagents and their uses. Research in this area has been particularly profitable lately as more uses for reagents have been found, which has led to increased demand for these rare items. Arcanoarchaeologists, researchers, critter hunters, and anybody who thinks they've got a knack for it are scouring the globe, gathering up as many rare animals, vegetables, minerals, and not sure whats as possible. Most go into making reagents, but there is a lot of stuff that no one knows for sure what it does—a lot of magical research is about figuring that out.

As you might expect, the leaders in magic sales are the megacorps, namely Aztechnology and Mitsuhama, but if you're talking about the bleeding edge of magic research, you have to talk about the Draco Foundation and the Atlantean Foundation. The Draco Foundation came into being when the great dragon Dunkelzahn died in an explosion on the day he was inaugurated as UCAS president. Since he was a great dragon, he was sitting on a pile of wealth, and he left a will that had a huge number of odd bequests, including items many people are chasing after to this day. The Draco Foundation was set up to manage his affairs and estate, while the Dunkelzahn Institute of Magical Research was established to further the dragon's magical interests. Working in coordination, these two organizations are formidable players in almost anything even tangentially related to magic.

The relatively recent rise of the Draco Foundation has brought mixed reactions from its older counterpart, the Atlantean Foundation, which—as you might guess from the name—began as an outfit looking for and into anything and everything that might be connected to the lost island of Atlantis. In the process they developed considerable relic-hunting and magic-researching capabilities. Dunkelzahn recognized this by dropping five billion nuyen on the Atlanteans in his will, which amped up their capabilities pretty significantly. This means they've got a

NEO-TOKYO

friendly relationship with the Dracos—which is perfectly understandable, as I'm pretty friendly with everyone who's given me five billion, too. But there's a rivalry going on as well; the two groups are often going after the same things. If you're going relic-hunting, be ready to outrun teams from one or both of these groups.

POLITICOS

Politicians may not have the clout they did back in the day, but there are still taxes to be collected, laws to enforce, infrastructure to be maintained, and careers to be made. Most government crap goes on way over your head. You don't need to worry about who's president or king of whatever nation you're in and almost all state and regional objectives require resources and manpower beyond any runner team's inventory. What you want are the local officials—mayors, aldermen, trustees, that sort of thing—who enforce the laws, collect the taxes, fund emergency and rescue services, and try to ensure everything works. These local leaders may not be as powerful as the corps, but as long as you're on their turf they've got a lot of ways to help you or hinder you. Good news is they're far enough down the food chain that there's a chance you can afford whatever it takes to buy their momentary cooperation. They're easier to blackmail, too. Ask around, look around, figure out whom you need to know and what you need to know about them—you never know when you're going to need them.

Besides the actual politicians, the other people you want to know are the policlubs. If there is any cause in the Sixth World that two or more people can agree on, they'll form a policlub around it. Sometimes the point of the club is to, you know, actually participate in politics. Other times the clubs are a cover for illegal activities, and a lot of them are just an excuse for people to get together and get wasted. Most of these groups wield no discernible power; you can pretty much ignore them. There are a few you should pay attention to.

One is the Humanis Policlub. Elves, dwarfs, trolls, and orks have been in the world for more than five decades,

LONDON

but for some people that hasn't been long enough to get used to the idea or to like having them around. Especially the orks and trolls. Following the proud tradition of racist groups since the dawn of time, Humanis is dedicated to putting a friendly face on hate. They're not against anyone, they'll tell you, they're just pro-human. They don't want to take anything away from the other metatypes, they just want to make sure humans get their fair share (which is pretty much everything).

Humanis serves as a nexus for a whole range of like-minded groups, from the unpleasant and aggressive Alamos 20,000 to the ultra-violent Hand of Five. If you're a non-human, if you like a non-human, or if you're going to be traveling anywhere non-humans are going to be, you need to be aware of what Humanis and its ilk are up to. They could pop in and mess things up at any time. Be warned.

The whole Newtonian thing about action causing reaction works with people, just like it does in physics. There are some notable pro-metahuman groups, from powerful lobbyists and organizers of the Ork Rights Commission to the radical and violence-prone Sons of Sauron. Like the anti-meta groups, these organizations are capable of causing distractions or chaos wherever you may be. And if you get pro-meta and anti-meta groups in the same place at the same time—well, I hope your contingency plans can deal with random explosions and scattered bodies.

In addition to racists of various flavors, you also need to keep an eye out for the various iterations of the neo-anarchist policlub. Sometimes they go by that name, just with capitals ("Neo-Anarchist"); but depending on the location and the situation they might call themselves the Panopticans or the Lambeth Martyrs or the People's Party or anything that sounds symbolic, sincere, and all about the little guy. Individual groups under the neo-anarchist policlub banner come in a variety of flavors. Some are wild-eyed bomb throwers who think everything should be reduced to rubble before trying to build something new; some think everything should be reduced to rubble and nothing built; some are earnest reformers, working within existing systems; some want

to change how nations work; some want an end to all nations; some like coffee; some like tea. What unites these disparate agendas and the people who love them is a to-the-core distrust of centralized power in all its forms and wiles. We're talking both megacorps and big government. They're all about individuals controlling their own lives, and families and communities living the way they want to live. That is enough to make them radicals in the eyes of anybody with any authority. They are outsiders, often criminalized by the people in power. Just like us. Which makes them natural allies—provided you have a high tolerance for rhetoric.

THE LAW

The most annoying thing local politicos can do is sic local law enforcement on you, because local ain't local anymore. Back in the day, law enforcement was a tangle of local, state, and federal authorities doing their own things—barely talking to one another and almost never sharing data. Oh sure, if you were a serial killer they'd spread the word and be on the lookout, but if you were a burglar or practiced any other illegal trade, you could pretty much move from one jurisdiction to the next and get a fresh start with no one being the wiser.

These days things are both worse and better. The bad part is most sprawls save their limited budgets by privatizing law enforcement—which means cops are corps. The two big boys are Lone Star, an independent that boasts about its tradition of no-holds-barred Texas justice (i.e., brutality), and Knight Errant, a division of Ares Macrotechnology. These two compete for big-ticket contracts; Knight Errant recently wrestled the plum of Seattle from Lone Star's hands. Other major security providers include Sakura Security, which has a large presence in Japan, German security giant Sternschutz, France's Esprit Industries (a subsidiary of Aztechnology), and Mitsuhama's one-two punch of Parashield and Petrovski Security. These companies have international reach, and their centralized databases are everywhere they are; do something in one jurisdiction and all the others know about it. So stay out of the database. Give them nothing—your name, your picture, your favorite make of whiskey, *anything*—because some smart cop, or smarter program, can use that anything to finger you. The good part is that while law enforcement corps share all data internally, it's in their best interest to make their rivals look as inept as possible—which means they never tell each other anything. So as long as you know who's covering what turf, you can still find cracks to fall into.

But don't get cocky. Law-enforcement contracts can change hands in a blink; what's Knight Errant territory one day may be Lone Star the next. Meaning you may be an unknown free agent one day and an actively sought fugitive the next. And be aware that many sprawls have multiple security companies in their borders—Knight Errant may have the city contract while Lone Star covers residential or maybe corporate compounds. Make sure you know who's patrolling which streets when.

BENEATH THE SURFACE

The thing about living in the shadows is that the denizens of the dusk tend not to be well organized. We're here because we don't get along with all the rules and protocols and drek formal organization requires. But we're alive because we understand that sometimes it's better to work together.

One of the premiere shadow groups is **JackPoint**, a collection of exceptional shadow minds gathered by FastJack, perhaps the best hacker the world has ever seen. 'Jack had to step down from the network recently, but the group is still going strong. The members of it aren't known, and its information is kept private, but if you can get wind of anything they're putting together, know that you're hearing from people who know their shit.

The **Denver Nexus** is another shadow group with a solid rep. They're hackers guarding the Denver Data Haven, one of the greatest stores of secret knowledge the world has ever seen. Or perhaps we should say "never seen," as not too many people get a look at what's stored there.

Then there are groups that live in the shadows but are not tied to shadowrunners. They like the dim light because of the secrecy it provides. One of these is the mysterious gathering of mages known as the **Black Lodge**. A cataclysmic upheaval that hit the UCAS capital of DeeCee in the summer of 2073 was blamed on the Black Lodge, and many people think the Lodge was somehow involved in the recent battle between the great dragons Lofwyr and Alamais that ended with Alamais dead. Everyone knows that the Black Lodge has their claws into a whole host of politicians and other leaders, but no one knows which. Short form: If you spot people in black robes casting weird mojo, take some notes, call the authorities, and get the hell out of there.

New Revolution is dedicated to re-establishing the old United States of America. A noble cause everyone else recognizes as a stupid-ass idea that totally ignores the current state of the world. In 2064 New Revolution attempted a coup, killing the UCAS president and Secretary of Defense and making a mess. Vice President Nadja Daviar survived and teamed with Brigadier General Angela Colloton and kept the UCAS together. They hunted down, tried, and executed New Revolution's leaders and everyone congratulated themselves on ridding the world of the lunatics. Yet here we are, over a decade later, and the New Revolution is still around. General Colloton helped stand off the coup and hunt the leaders down, but has been dogged by rumors linking her to the radicals for years. Rumors that didn't stop her from becoming UCAS president. If they're true, she's in a heck of a position to build New Revolution into a major player; I cannot tell you how many betting pools there are on that one.

OFF THE JOB

Like just about everyone with a pulse, you're going to spend most of your time getting ready for work, working, or recovering from work. But every now and then you might find yourself with free time and a couple of extra nuyen. Luckily for you, there are a wide range of activities to make sure that you and your money don't develop a long-term relationship.

MONEY

Speaking of money, always remember to make sure you've got the right kind of currency for wherever you'll be spending. The dominant currency in the world is the **nuyen**, but some stubborn nations insist on issuing their own currencies (like England's pound or Switzerland's franc). Still, even in those nations the nuyen tends to be accepted readily. All of which is rendered pretty much moot by electronic transactions. Actual cash is rarely used—maybe for special transactions or in areas so backwards they don't have Matrix access (scary, but real). You might get dinged for conversion fees in states with local currency, but that's about the only hassle.

Certified credsticks are the tool of choice for people who don't trust wireless transfers or want to avoid leaving any trails. Smaller than your thumb (unless you're a pixie, in which case, shut up), credsticks carry funds certified by one of the financial powers of the world. The bigger the bank, the more stable the money stored on the credstick, so most people like to use sticks certified by the biggest bank there is, the Zurich-Orbital Gemeinschaftsbank .

Corporations jumped on the currency bandwagon decades ago and started offering corporate scrip, usable only in corporate locales. The megacorps love paying their employees in scrip, as it keeps money in the corporate family. The fact that corporate scrip's uses are somewhat narrow make it less valuable, but if that's all there is, take it. Remember, the megas are huge—somebody somewhere wants scrip and there's a thriving market for scrip exchanges.

THE MATRIX

When you want to amuse yourself in your downtime, this is where you start. Music's on there, movies are on there, sports broadcasts, virtual nightclubs, chat rooms, epic battles on twisted landscapes, and so on and so forth.

The Matrix is around most of us every minute of every day, so much that we don't think about it much. We just use it. Most of the time we use it as augmented reality (AR), an overlay that adds information and occasional glitz to the world around us in the form of augmented reality objects, or AROs. You can also go whole-hog and dive into virtual reality (VR), leaving your meat body behind for a trip into the realm of pure information. While the speed of VR is convenient for hackers, most people like the ability to use the Matrix while carrying on with their lives at the same time.

With AR, the Matrix is constantly around you. As long as you've got the right gear, messages from friends pop up as floating windows hovering in your field of vision, moving as you move. Stores you walk by tell you about their current sales customized to your preferences based on what you've bought before. Music and video samples are everywhere, waiting for you to open them with a quick gesture and see if there's anything you like.

How do these music and movies match up to your taste, and how do they know where to find you? The magic of corporate control. You see, the Matrix has gone through two major Crashes, and been re-invented after each one. After the second one, back in 2064, the Matrix made the leap to wireless, and along with that it moved into a neo-anarchist ideal of freedom and openness, a network open and accessible to anyone with the tools to log on. That lasted a good decade until the corps realized there was a resource out there they weren't exploiting. After confessing that sin to their respective clergy and saying a few Hail Marys, the corps went about setting that mistake right, instituting more controls over the Matrix so that they can better shape what goes where. Naturally, their best customers get the best bandwidth, while the less resource-endowed are left to deal with spotty access and slow traffic.

Unless we know how to play the game. The clampdown of corporate control has re-ignited the battle between hackers and the overseers of the Matrix, as shadowrunners look to exploit the weaknesses of the new system and stay one step ahead of security.

But that's mostly another topic. For now, just know that everyone and everything is on the Matrix, but the easiest things to find are the things programmers are betting you want to buy.

MUSIC

Music's been around since *homo erectus* noticed different things made different noises when you hit them, and it's not going anywhere. (Though frankly, some of it sounds like Neanderthals banging rocks. But there's no accounting for taste, right?) Point is, whatever your taste in music may be, you can find someone playing it. For classic rock fans, the legendary Maria Mercurial is on her comeback tour, laying down the mighty riffs that made her a star back in the '50s, and Concrete Dreams is once again calling down the thunder. Orxploitation, the sound of the streets, continues to be blasted in sprawl barrens, with CrimeTime acting as the old-school standard bearer for the movement. Disposable electro-pop will never die, no matter how many stakes we bury in its pulsating heart, with the Latch-Key Kids currently playing the leading role in blasting annoyingly catchy ditties into everyone's lizard brain. And elven

folk exists for those who don't like their music turned up to eleven, with Tír Tairngire icon Deirdre showing everyone how it's done.

TRIDEO

Sometimes you just gotta plop down in your favorite chair (or on your favorite floorboard if all the furniture has been burned for heat) and let flickering images take over your brain. For these times, trideo is there for you, bringing you the latest in news, sports, and entertainment programming. While 3-D was clumsy and clunky in its earliest years, now it drops you believably into the middle of the story. And the level of immersion is up to you—stick with the visual and audio versions if you want simplicity, or plug into simsense to get the full-bore, multi-sensory, emotion-enhancing experience. You can watch sports events as if you were in the stands, or you can buzz around the field, seeing the game as the players see it.

There are fictional trids for every taste. The *Cree & Dido* series provides the slapstick and physical comedy the masses love, while the hit *Water Margin* has spawned an action series about shadowrunners fighting government corruption in Seattle (a theme that has gained extra resonance thanks to recent scandals in Seattle Governor Kenneth Brackhaven's administration). Like reality shows? *Toxic Hunter* takes you to the most blighted spots in the world and puts host Brennan "Heavy" O'Dell against the local critters; his recent battle with a pack of ghouls in Lagos was a ratings winner. The classic *Neil the Ork Barbarian*, a favorite of your parents when they were kids, has gotten a slick upgrade and reboot that puts you, the viewer, right in Neil's furry boots. First-person medieval sword-swinging, fur-bikini-slashing, muscle-flexing action—what more do you want?

SPORTS

If the twentieth century was about figuring out how to turn professional sports into big business, the twenty-first was about how to best use sports business to benefit other corporate interests. Basketball, baseball, football, soccer, and hockey still draw crowds, but now

fans can follow their favorite player's MeFeed, watching the trideos they watch, listening to the music they listen to, and learning about their favorite fashion and foods—all of which you can buy with a quick gesture at the right ARO. Where kids once dreamed of following their idols by working hard to earn their way into the big leagues to become stars in their own right, they're now content to just buy as much of their idol's lifestyle as possible.

The megacorps have also been growing new sports that give consumers/fans the addictive rush of fast-moving action and bone-crushing violence. Right now the most popular new sports are urban brawl and combat biking. Urban brawl is a no-holds-barred variant of capture-the-flag played on city streets with guns and magic. Combat biking is something like polo, only played on motorcycles. By psychopaths.

FOOD

Back when overpopulation of the world was a serious concern, people turned to the mighty soybean as a promising food source (when combined with lentils and green food dye, it makes a tasty ... oh, never mind). It's packed with protein, very versatile, and fairly easy to grow. Thanks to several global plagues and ecological disasters, world population is not quite as big a concern as the amount of arable land on the planet, but the net result is the same: Soy is a major food staple. Soykaf is the beverage that gets us moving in the morning, soyburgers are a popular lunchtime choice, and tofu is to our dinners what chicken was in the twentieth century. There are a few restaurants and grocery stores here and there that sell real meat, but they tend to be beyond the budget of all but the most affluent.

While meat is rare, sugar substitutes are plentiful. The megacorporate food producers of the world know how much people like their sweets, and they know satisfying cravings keeps populations in line. The Stuffer Shacks and other convenience stores of the world are filled with Sweeteez, Krak-l-Snaps, and other nutrition-free foods that give corporate drones and poor shadowrunners a small bit of pleasure in their lives.

SEX

I thought about calling this section "Romance," but threw that out because there ain't nobody doing the box of chocolates, bouquet of roses, and horse-drawn carriage ride in the park anymore. Then I thought about calling it "Dating," but it's not like you can ask Jane the leather-clad razorgirl if she'd like to go to the malt shoppe with you Friday afternoon. So I decided that since I've been straight up with you so far, I'll call the primal urge what it is.

So yeah, people in the Sixth World have sex. In plenty of ways, in plenty of combinations, and across all

WHERE TO SHOP

You need stuff, and there is a vast array of vendors whose every moment is dedicated to selling you stuff. What a great world, huh? Anyway, here are some representative store chains to give you some idea where to go to get what you need.

DEPARTMENT STORES

Luxury: Lordstrungs, Lacy's
First-Class: Fallon and Nelson, The Beaux
Family Style: Wordsworth, Lears and Mervins, Meyer's Superstores
No Frills: Kong-Wal Mart, Saver's Central, WeaponsWorld

GROCERIES AND CONVENIENCE STORES

Luxury: Society Grocers
First-Class: Meyers Groceries, Natural Vat Foods
Family Style: Allenson's Groceries, Carrefour, Carry&Save, SAMS Virtual Marketplaces, Quickway
No Frills: Stuffer Shack, Loco Foods, MiniMart, Buy-Low Foods

RESTAURANTS

Luxury: Azteca International, The Edge, Takuri's, Trattoria Pagilacci's
First-Class: Green Village, The Gravity Bar, La Gallaria, Kau Kau's, Purple Haze
Family Style: Gracie's for Ribs, Bosco's, McKraken's Seafood, Bangkok Hut, Maximillion's
No Frills: Cap'n Beef, McHugh's, Nacho Mama, Nukit Burgers, Street Pizza, You Should Not Eat So Much!

HOTELS

Luxury: TripleTree, Lucas, Hilton, Sheraton, Elysium
First-Class: Westin, Gold Lion Inn
Family Style: Wylie's Gala, Rubikan Int'l
No Frills: Rent & Rest, Comfy Cubicle, Aston's Moneymakers, The Cubes

COMPUTERS AND ELECTRONICS

Luxury: Nybbles & Bytes, Gate's Computer Showcase
First-Class: Hardware Etc., Blood Monies Software
Family Style: Software Sellers, Microdeck, DeGear's Electronics
No Frills: Computer Exchange, Hacker's Delight, Kennedy's Used Electronics

CLUB FRANCHISES

End of the Earth, Farnsworth's, Miami, Dante's Inferno, Equilibrium, Flair, Congregation of Rhythms

SPECIALTY CHAINS

Armanté (Fashion), Body + Art (Bodyart), Life by Evo (Design Megastore), Lord's AutoShops (Auto Repair), Lore Stores Inc., Pentagrams (Talismonger), Robyn's (Hardcopy Bookstore), Facets of New York (Jeweler), Link'n'Fix (Commlink Repair Clinic), Zoé (Fashion)

metatypes; gender is no object. You got a fetish, you can be damn sure that someone's ready to indulge you.

Like everything else in the world, sex has been commodified, a slickly packaged product designed to make you forget it once meant something real. Prostitution thrives where it's legal (about 99.998 percent of the known world). Some brothels cater to specific fantasies, stocked with body types or metatypes their customers want. If your fantasies are more specific—and you don't care much about the human cost of your actions—head to a bunraku parlor, where the employees are pretty much puppets, surgically altered and implanted with personafixes so that they become stunning imitations of simstars and other celebrities. For just a few hundred nuyen, you can spend an hour pretending you're someone they'd give the time of day—or whatever you have in mind—to. A booming, and less exploitive, industry is simsense porn, which lets you feel everything the actors look like they should be feeling. (I know some actors in these things—it's a job with every wiggle choreographed and fake shriek rehearsed. You don't want to experience the kind of boredom they're really feeling.)

With sex and prostitution being as open as it is in the Sixth World, you might think it reduces the opportunities for blackmail. You'd be right. But only partly. There are still some taboos, some lines that should not be crossed. Many spouses tend to expect fidelity (and property laws still favor the wronged party), so finding incriminating evidence of cheating is still effective leverage. Also, sex with children (though the definition of "children" varies from place to place) is out of bounds, and bestiality and necrophilia are the kind of things that can negatively impact a career if they come to light. In the end, your job is to know the basic sexual mores of the area you're in, so you can use violations of those mores against select people.

STAYING HEALTHY

Staying healthy in the world ain't easy, and not just because people are always pointing guns at each other. There are plenty of other threats to your health to worry about.

In the early twenty-first century, the world was an overcrowded mess. Then a new disease came along and wiped out about a quarter of the population. Whether it was the planet's way of rebalancing the ecosystem or something we did to ourselves is still debated, but Virally Induced Toxic Allergy Syndrome, or VITAS, was nasty. It triggered something akin to anaphylactic shock—even in people with no allergies—and people suffocated to death when their respiratory system swelled shut. There's old video around the Matrix of victims fighting to inhale; it ain't pretty.

Every now and then a new strain of VITAS raises its ugly head—nothing anywhere near as bad as the first outbreak, but it keeps the medicos on their toes. Then, in the 2040s, we got something entirely new: the human-metahuman vampire virus, or HMHVV. This did not, as the name implies, give victims the power to change into bats or wolves. What it did do was leach the body of radiation-fighting pigment, stop the production of red blood cells, spurred dental development, and shut down the digestive system. Victims, no matter what color they began with, turned dead flesh grey, had to stay out of the sun, grew fangs, and needed copious amounts of fresh blood to stay alive. That last part's important—they are not immortal. If you're ever trapped in a barrens alley with some nosferatu closing in on you, a few bullets in the right place will stop them for good.

As was the case with VITAS, there are a number of strains of HMHVV which cause different types of pseudo-undead, including ghouls, banshees, and things that don't match legends. The dark alleys of Sixth World got a little darker with this virus.

But the Sixth World doesn't need to rely on viruses to mess you up. There are a staggering number of mind-altering drugs, from the street favorite novacoke to the mind-bending zen, from the pure combat rush of kamikaze to the astral sensation of deepweed. If there's anything you want to feel, there's a drug that delivers it. We've also got new forms of addiction, like better-than-life chips (BTLs, or beetles). To make one of these, take your basic simsense recording of some powerful emotional experience, then amp up every bit of the content. Want a bigger adrenaline rush than surfing a ten-meter wave, or a more brain-crushing thrill than skydiving from the stratosphere? Want to experience something better

than sex? Then upload a BTL right into your brain. Fair warning, though: You might find reality pales in comparison, and you'll spend the rest of your life enduring the pale shadows so you can have a few moments of full-color BTL bliss.

So we've got your viruses, we've got your drugs, and we've got all the other diseases and situations that have been killing metahumanity for hundreds or thousands of years. The question you need to ask yourself now is, how do I get help once I'm messed up?

Public health systems range from inadequate to non-existent. There's just too much money in medicine to leave it to the do-gooders. You want medical care of any sort, it's going to cost you.

The best care is provided by the healthcare corps, and as long as you're willing to shell out a pile of nuyen, you get the works, including the best technology and ambulance service to anywhere in the world, even combat hot zones. But you probably don't have that much cash, or you wouldn't be slugging it out in the shadows. Still, you might be able to afford some basics, like medics who will pull your bleeding carcass out of the barrens and stabilize you until your spellslinger friend arrives with a heal spell. That may not sound like much, but it can save your life. That's why most shadowrunners with any sort of rep at all buy a basic contract with one of the providers. The venerable DocWagon is the most popular, with decades of experience navigating the meanest streets, but Evo's CrashCart, with access to the parent corp's cutting edge med tech is gaining ground.

If you can't afford a medical contract, you can always go to one of the hospitals or clinics run by the med corps and pay for whatever you need at the moment. If you can't afford that, you need a street doc. If you survive more than two runs, chances are you'll pick up some basic first aid, like how to keep blood from spurting everywhere. The more runs you survive, the more you learn. Some runners have a real knack for anatomy and first aid and earned a rep for doing good work; injured runners took to seeking them out and before long they had a sideline practicing unlicensed med in severely non-sterile locations. Sometimes you'll find a real doctor operating a street clinic. Or former doctors now on the streets due to addiction, crime, incompetence, or some combination thereof. A lot of us tend to find the upgraded former runners to be more reliable than the downgraded doctors, but in the end, whichever you choose, you're taking a risk. Especially if you're looking for someone to install a secondhand cybereye, cheap.

GETTING AROUND

One thing you need to always remember in the Sixth World—after "Everything has a price"—is corporations love predictability and live to control. Take GridGuide, marketed as the ultimate convenience for the commuter. It's a programmed control system for your personal vehicle that takes you where you want to go with little input from you, the driver. And by golly, traffic flows more smoothly when everyone uses GridGuide and you can do other things while you drive, so it's great. Of course, GridGuide only works where the corps want it to work, which is fine for corporate drones on their daily commutes, but no good at all if you need to go into the barrens or a not-generally-open-to-the-public industrial area. And even if you're in approved areas, GridGuide doesn't respond well to emergencies, like evasive maneuvers or quick getaways. In fact, if you try to do anything GridGuide doesn't think is wise or safe, the system is going to drag you down. (But doesn't it always?) If you ever intend to go off the beaten path, or to maybe do something out of the ordinary, you're going to need to learn how to drive and to have a vehicle that does not depend on the power of the grid.

If you're traveling from city to city or country to country, you can rely on your personal vehicle, but there are other modes of transportation available. Trains and buses are available in most sprawls, and they can take you from sprawl to sprawl. The security in intra-city transit is pretty light; if you have the nuyen, you can ride. You may need to pass through security, and your SIN will be checked for longer trips, but on trains the scanners are cheap and easily fooled. Plus, you get to ride a bullet train, which tends to be awesome. If they remembered to clean it.

If you opt for air travel, you've got three choices: regular, suborbital, and semiballistic.

Semiballistic is the fastest and the most expensive; it can get you from Europe to North America in less than an hour, and you'll pay through the nose for the privilege. Security is tight. SIN scanners are top of the line and nearly impossible to fool. All weapons will be checked (don't even think about explosives) and all cyberware must be deactivated.

Sub-orbitals are slightly slower, slightly cheaper, and slightly easier to infiltrate. Slightly. Sub-orbital passengers are usually megacorporate clients, and the corps want them to feel safe. Security is tight, and violations will be dealt with harshly.

Regular air travel is for regular people. Security is present, but quality varies from provider to provider; if your fake SIN and forged documentation are good enough you should do fine. Depending.

Of course, if you want to avoid public transportation altogether, there are ways to get around. Hitch a ride in the back of a cargo van, or in a container ship, or as part of a drone convoy. And then there's the almighty t-bird, the favorite choice of smugglers, spies, and anyone else involved in illicit border crossings. There are several different types of t-birds, but they have a few common characteristics: they're small, maneuverable, capable of landing in tight spots, and able to fly low to avoid radar. Learn how to pilot one of these babies well, and you'll never lack for work. Or anti-aircraft fire from folks you've pissed off.

SHADOWRUN CONCEPTS

THE GAME & YOU

As a player in a *Shadowrun* game, your primary objective is to make things happen. Many of those things should be awesome. The gamemaster will set up a story for you, then your character will decide how to respond to the initial setup and all the events that happen once the story gets rolling. Sooner or later—hopefully sooner—you'll face a challenge, something that requires you to test your abilities. The rules are here so that you and the gamemaster can determine the outcome of your actions. Did the shot from your Ares Predator V hit the ork ganger right between the tusks? Are you able to sneak past the sleepy dwarf guard without waking him up? Did you counter the stunball the troll mage threw at you and dissolve it into millions of pieces of glittery mana?

The rules are here to help you move the story forward, to give you outcomes for the decisions you're making. They are not a perfect mirror of reality—at times, the rules provide abstract ways to determine the results of concrete actions, because it speeds up the game and prevents players from having to roll dice over and over again to complete certain tasks. This chapter describes the basic rules concepts you need to understand to play *Shadowrun*, complete your missions, and get the nuyen you've got coming to you.

THE GAMEMASTER & YOU

Shadowrun games are led by a gamemaster, who guides a group of players through the adventures awaiting them. At the gaming table, the gamemaster sets up and advances the story, governs the actions of the non-player characters, and determines the results of tests and other rules-related matters. This gives them a certain amount of power in the game. When the game is working well, the gamemaster will be able to move the story along and work with the players to make an exciting, involving experience. Role-playing is a cooperative endeavor, and every member of the gaming group should be working together to help each member of the group have fun (even the gamemasters, since they should occasionally be allowed some enjoyment). Players should feel like their characters can play an important role in shaping and advancing the story, and the gamemaster should feel that they can keep the story moving ahead without having to engage in prolonged and distracting discussions about the rules. The more members of the group work together, the better their chances of shooting people in the face for money in spectacular and amazing fashions will be.

For more advice on running a *Shadowrun* game and working with players, see **Gamemaster Advice**, p. 332.

HOW TO MAKE THINGS HAPPEN

Your *Shadowrun* character does all the things a normal person does, along with the occasional grand theft, espionage mission, or hit job. Most of these things—common tasks like eating, sleeping, and crossing an empty street—are done automatically and are kept in the background of the game. When you need to do something difficult or extraordinary, or when you need to avoid someone who has got you in their crosshairs, you have to roll the dice to determine a result.

HITS & THRESHOLDS

Shadowrun uses six-sided dice, and usually you need a good quantity of them. The amount of dice you roll is referred to as a dice pool. Additions to the dice pool are often noted by a number in front of the term"D6," so that 3D6 refers to three six-sided dice. When you roll, you want to see fives and sixes. Each one of these numbers that comes up is called a **hit**. The more hits you roll, the better chance you have to pull off whatever you are attempting to do.

Each time you roll the dice, you'll be looking to get enough hits to meet or beat a **threshold**, which is the number of hits you need to do the thing you're trying to do. That threshold changes depending on what it is you want to accomplish; sometimes it will be a set number of hits, other times you'll just be trying to get more hits than the other guy. There will also be occasions when you see how many hits you can rack up over an extended period. All of this will be covered more in the section dealing with tests.

Descriptions of skills often have examples of thresholds that should be used, but gamemasters can fall back on the simple guidelines shown in the **Success Test Thresholds** table.

SUCCESS TEST THRESHOLDS

DIFFICULTY	THRESHOLD
Easy	1
Average	2
Hard	4
Very Hard	6
Extreme	8–30

In most tests, the number of hits you get can do more than just determine whether you succeed; it can add to your success. The number of hits you have that is more than what you needed is referred to as your **net hits**. Net hits can increase the damage you do in combat or have other positive effects. At the gamemaster's discretion, she can reward extraordinary rolls that result in a high number of net hits (four or more) with a little extra accomplishment for the runner, something that may make their next test easier.

BUYING HITS

Sometimes it can save time to skip a test and allow a player simply to buy hits, especially if they are rolling so many dice they are fairly certain they'll succeed. To buy hits, simply count one hit for every four dice in your pool, rounded down. Note that this can't be a halfway measure—you can't buy a couple of hits and then roll for the rest. Either you buy hits with all your dice, or you roll with all of them.

Buying hits often should not be done if there is a chance of a glitch or critical glitch that might significantly change the course of the game's actions. You need your gamemaster's approval to buy hits. If he doesn't want you to buy hits for the test, then you're not buying hits—get ready to roll.

GLITCHES

Along with fives and sixes, you need to pay attention to how many ones show up when you roll the dice. If more than half the dice you rolled show a one, then you've got problems. This is called a **glitch**. When you glitch, something bad happens. Maybe you drop your gun. Maybe you trip over a broken piece of pavement you hadn't noticed. Whatever the case, something happens that makes your life more difficult. Just what it is that happens is left to the discretion of the gamemaster.

The guideline for a glitch is that whatever happens should make life more difficult for the particular shadowrunner while not disastrously interfering with their work. For example, a runner who rolls a glitch while working to defuse an explosive may drop his wire cutters, or may call up the wrong augmented reality window of information about the nature of the device. The gamemaster should not, however, decree that the player abruptly cut the wrong wire so that the explosive blows up in their face. As an additional factor, the gamemaster may decide to make the glitch more severe if the player only had one or two hits along with it.

Note that it is possible to roll a glitch on a test that has enough hits to be successful. In these cases, the glitch does not cancel out the success; instead, the glitch occurs in addition to the success. For example, a troll could take a mighty swing at a dwarf, rolling enough hits to make contact but also glitching. The dwarf takes damage from the troll's beefy fist slamming into his face, but the force of the swing and the need to aim downward takes the troll off balance, sending him to the ground after the punch lands. In the next couple of rounds, the troll has to get up on his feet and get back into a fighting stance.

There may be circumstances where a player rolls a glitch and also does not achieve a single hit. This is called a **critical glitch**, and this is where the drek hits the fan. These are the dice rolls that could put characters' lives at risk, where they're going to have to think fast and move faster in order to get out with their hoops intact. Again, exactly what happens is up to the gamemaster, but a critical glitch should throw a serious monkey wrench into shadowrunners' plans, making them scramble to recover. While an abrupt, ignominious death

is possible when a critical glitch is rolled, gamemasters and players will likely have more fun if the roll keeps the players alive but forces them to improvise, test the limits of their skills, and develop desperate plans to help them stay alive.

Clearly, a critical glitch is something players want to avoid, and if they really feel the need to do it, they can use a point of Edge to do so (see **Edge Effects**, p. 56). By using the Close Call function of Edge, players can downgrade a critical glitch to a mere glitch, or entirely negate a glitch (note that they cannot spend two points to negate a critical glitch). This does not, however, do anything about their total lack of hits. They'll just have to suck that up.

TESTS AND LIMITS

When you roll dice in *Shadowrun*, you are generally making one form of **test** or another. There are four things you need to know when you're making a test. They are:

1. What kind of test it is;
2. How many dice you should roll (usually this is a rating of a skill added to the rating of a linked attribute);
3. The limit on the test, which tells you the maximum amount of hits you can apply to the test;
4. The threshold for the test.

EXAMPLE

Saskatchewan Pete is on astral overwatch, keeping an eye out for spirits and spells while his team infiltrates a corporate facility. As they are working to breach an outer door, he catches a glimpse of an aura approaching and recognizes it as belonging to a spellcaster. Wanting to take out the threat before it gives him any headaches, Pete casts Stunbolt at the interloper, hoping to catch them off guard. He rolls 11 dice on the test; he gets 3 hits, but he also gets six ones, meaning he glitches. The gamemaster decides that Pete paid too close attention to the aura of his own spell, so his astral sight—his vision of all things magical—is dazzled temporarily, giving him a penalty on any tests he makes while performing his astral overwatch duties.

The opposing spellcaster was hurt but not taken out by Pete's casting, and he's still coming. In fact, he's got a Blast spell brewing that could put a real hurt on Takouba, the group's street samurai. The spellcaster throws it, and Pete tries to counterspell it. Unfortunately, Pete gets six ones on his Counterspelling test and not a single hit—it's a critical glitch. The gamemaster decides that Pete manages to deflect the spell away from Takouba and right onto himself. Pete then takes the full force of the Blast spell. A bad overwatch assignment just got a hell of a lot worse, and the team will have to figure out how to function with an injured mage.

If Pete wanted to, he could use a point of Edge and avoid the critical glitch, which would keep the spell from deflecting to him, though Takouba would still have to deal with its effects. Get hurt or watch your partner go down—that's how life in the shadows goes.

The notation for a test gives you all the information you need to know. Test notations look slightly different based on the kind of test it is—either a Success test, an Opposed test, an Extended test, or a Teamwork test. Each type is discussed below.

There are two different types of **limits**: inherent limits and limits from gear. Your character has three inherent limits—Physical, Mental, and Social—that are derived from their attributes (p. 51). These limits represent just how far you can push your body, your mind, and your charm (elven characters may be dismayed to discover that their charm is not, in fact, boundless). In game terms, limits tell you how many of the hits from your initial roll you can actually use to determine the result of the test. If you roll more hits than your limit allows, then you can only count the hits equal to the limit. Occasionally runners might find ways to extend or even blow by their limits, but they should be aware of these limits so they know how it might affect any upcoming tests. One method to get around a limit is Edge—by using a point of Edge, you may choose to ignore your limit for a single test (see **Edge Effects**, p. 56).

Note that limits generally only apply to tests involving a dice pool derived from a skill and an attribute. Tests using a single attribute, or two attributes, do not use limits.

Often, rather than using their inherent limits, runners will be limited by the piece of gear they are using. Each weapon, for example, has an Accuracy rating that serves as its limit for attacks made with that weapon, while cyberdecks have attributes that serve as limits on a variety of Matrix actions. For more info, check out the write-ups on different pieces of gear in **Street Gear**, p. 416.

EXAMPLE

Takouba has a Physical limit of 6, thanks in part to his high Body and Strength. He starts his shadowrunning career using a Defiance T-250 shotgun, which has an Accuracy of 4. He uses the Accuracy as a limit in all tests for shooting the shotgun; his Physical limit does not come into play. He has an Agility of 5 and a Shotguns skill of 6, meaning he rolls 11 dice when he uses the gun. After a time, though, he notices that he is losing too many hits due to the relatively low Accuracy of the Defiance, so he saves up his nuyen and invests in a PJSS Model 55, with an Accuracy of 6. He still uses the Accuracy instead of his Physical limit, but now that he's working with a higher Accuracy, he is not going to lose as many hits. He may then add a laser sight to the gun, which bumps the Accuracy up to 7. It's now higher than his Physical limit, but the Accuracy is still the limit he uses when shooting that particular gun. He's got plenty of room to grow now. Once his Shotgun skill gets to 8 or 9, he still generally won't hit the limit, and he'll be bringing drekloads of pain to anyone at the wrong end of his gun barrels.

When a limit is imposed by a piece of gear, it overrides the inherent limit, whether it is higher or lower than that limit. For example, the Accuracy of a firearm acts as the limit for tests that involve shooting that gun (see p. 416 for more discussion of gear and its attributes), so no inherent limits are used in that test. The limit is a game statistic for the piece of gear that reflects both its general nature and the quality of its workmanship.

SUCCESS TESTS

Success tests generally occur when a shadowrunner has to use her abilities to accomplish something in a single moment of time. This could involve weaving a car through traffic at high speed, looking for a needle in a haystack, or lifting a heavy object. A Success test (also known as a Simple test) is a matter of rolling up enough hits to meet the threshold for the test, then moving on. Success test notation looks like this:

OPPOSED TESTS

Opposed tests happen whenever a shadowrunner has to pit her skills against another individual, living thing, or (occasionally) technological force. Maybe she's trying to sneak by a security guard in a factory complex, knock out a belligerent ganger with her stungun, or talk Mr. Johnson into offering a higher payday. Notation for Opposed tests looks like this:

Note that Opposed tests do not list a threshold. That's because in an Opposed test, you are trying to generate more hits than an opponent. Sometimes the opponent is rolling the same skill + attribute combination, sometimes a different one; see **Using Skills**, p. 128, for information on what skills and attributes are used in specific Opposed tests.

EXTENDED TESTS

Rather than taking place in a single moment, some tests take place over time. Maybe you're taking a few days to learn a new spell or you're repairing your beat-up Americar and you need to determine how long the job takes. Extended test notation looks like this:

Instead of obtaining all of the needed hits in a single roll, Extended tests allow you to make repeated rolls and then accumulate the hits you made in each roll until you either reach the threshold, you run out of time because there's something else you need to do or because people start shooting at you, or you run out of rolls. Note that on each roll of the Extended test, you can only count the hits equal to or under the applicable limit (unless you decide to use Edge to get around the limit; see p. 56). The **interval** for an Extended test describes how much time passes between each roll. Intervals can be as short as a Combat Turn or as long as a month. The Extended Test Thresholds table provides some suggestions on thresholds for Extended tests, while the Extended Test Intervals table can help gamemasters choose the proper interval.

Extended tests cannot last forever; at some point, characters reach the limit of their abilities, and further efforts will do them no good. To simulate this, with each successive roll on an Extended test, players should remove one die from their dice pool. Eventually they'll have no dice left, and the test will be over.

Generally, all of the rolls for an Extended test do not need to be made concurrently. Shadowrunners can set the task aside for a bit, do something else, then pick up where they left off with the amount of hits they had remaining in place.

A NOTE ON ROUNDING

Sometimes you're going to have to divide some number or another, and sometimes that will require rounding. The general rule of thumb is to round up, unless a specific rule tells you to do otherwise.

EXAMPLE

Sorsha's Americar took a beating in the last fight, and she needs to sit down and get it fixed. The gamemaster judges that the damage is severe enough to warrant a threshold of 18, and he assigns a Long interval of an hour to the work. Sorsha rolls 10 dice on this test, and the first roll goes well—she gets 5 hits. Fortunately, her Mental limit is 5, so she can count all the hits. Sorsha takes away a die for the second roll (representing the second hour) and rolls poorly, getting only 2 hits. She has a total of 7 hits now. The next hour she rolls 8 dice and gets 4 hits; then she rolls 7 and gets another 4. Her total is now 15, though her dice pool is dwindling. Her next roll of 6 dice only produces a single hit, but the roll after that gets 2. She has her 18! The Americar is now repaired, and the job took six rolls, meaning six hours have passed in the game.

EXTENDED TEST THRESHOLDS

DIFFICULTY	THRESHOLD
Easy	6
Average	12
Hard	18
Very Hard	24
Extreme	30+

EXTENDED TEST INTERVALS

TASK	TIME INTERVAL
[illegible]	[illegible]
Quick	1 minute
[illegible]	[illegible]
Average	30 minutes
Long	1 hour
Consuming	1 day
Exhaustive	1 week
Mammoth	1 month

EXTENDED TESTS & GLITCHES

A glitch does not necessarily cause the Extended test to fail. Instead, it causes difficulties or delays in the effort. The gamemaster may choose to reduce the hits accumulated to this point by 1D6. If this reduces the total hits to zero or less, the test fails.

On a critical glitch, the test fails—no dice roll needed. Whatever work you put into the test is lost.

TEAMWORK TESTS

Shadowrunners learn quickly that no one survives for long on the streets by themselves. You have to function as a group, and there are times when all members of a team pitch in to help out on a job. Teamwork tests simulate the effect of group members working together.

To start a Teamwork test, your group needs to choose someone to act as the leader. All of the others serve as assistants, and they should roll the appropriate skill + attribute. For each assistant that scores at least one hit, the relevant limit for the leader's test increases by one. Additionally, each hit the assistants make adds one die to the leader's dice pool. The most dice that can be added to the test is equal to the leader's rating in the applicable skill, or the highest attribute rating if the test involves two attributes. The leader then rolls their adjusted dice pool and tries to beat the threshold for the test.

If any assistant rolls a critical glitch, then the leader receives no adjustments to the relevant limit, in addition to the regular effects of a critical glitch. A glitch prevents that assistant from adding an adjustment to the limit.

EXAMPLE

The shadowrunning team is tracking a particularly elusive shaman, and each and every member of the team needs to pitch in. Takouba, with 3 ranks in Tracking and an Intuition of 4 (total of 7) and a Mental limit of 5, takes the lead in the test. Lliane has Tracking 2 and Intuition 3, so she rolls five dice and gets one hit. Saskatchewan Pete and Sorsha both do not have the Tracking skill, so each of them rolls their Intuition – 1, which is 2 for Pete, 3 for Sorsha. Pete gets no hits and Sorsha gets one, so altogether the team is adding 2 to Takouba's limit and 2 dice to his test. He will roll 9 dice with a limit of 7 and see how many hits he gets.

TRYING AGAIN

A shadowrunner who gives up after a quick failure is a shadowrunner who will never know the satisfaction of getting a maglock to finally open after repeated tries and then slipping into an office just before the security sweep passes by. Re-trying on a failed test is allowed, but players must take a cumulative -2 penalty on each retry. If the character takes a sufficient break from trying (it's up to gamemaster discretion how long a break is needed), they can begin the task again with no penalty.

Note that taking a shot or another swing of the sword after missing does not count as trying again. Each attempted shot, sword swing, or punch counts as its own action, rather than being a re-try of a previous failure.

TIME PASSING

Time passes in *Shadowrun* just like it does anywhere else. Most of the time you won't have to track every minute or second, though we won't stop you from doing so if that somehow increases your enjoyment. Sometimes time will be of the essence as runners try to get to a meeting, or attempt to intercept a convoy that follows a very tight schedule, but even in those situations it's best to keep track of time in an abstract fashion rather than measuring it down to the second. When the bullets start flying, however, a little closer attention to the passage of time should be paid.

COMBAT TURNS

When fighting breaks out, action takes place in a series of **Combat Turns**, where each participant gets the chance to select and take actions. Each Combat Turn lasts approximately three seconds, representing the amount of time it takes individuals to stage an attack.

ACTIONS

There are three different kinds of **actions** in *Shadowrun*: Free Actions, Simple Actions, and Complex Actions. On their turn, characters take a specific action or combination of actions. They then make tests to generate a result. The way they spend actions, as well as the specific actions in each category, are discussed on p. 163.

LEVELS OF PLAY

The main rules for *Shadowrun, Fifth Edition* have been designed to provide characters who are skilled and capable from the moment they are created but have room to grow into true legends of the shadowrunning world. Different groups may prefer, however, to play at different levels. Some may want to start with a more street-level campaign, making their players figure out how to survive with relatively low skills until they can earn enough Karma to truly grow into their abilities. Other groups might prefer a more cinematic, high-powered game, with characters who are among the world's elite right off the bat and only grow fiercer as they further hone their abilities.

At different junctures in the book, including at character creation, rules are provided for normal, street-level, and prime runner campaigns to help players and gamemasters play the game in a way that suits your preferences.

YOUR CHARACTER

At the heart of your experience in *Shadowrun* is your character. This is who you are in the Sixth World, the person whose story you will follow and develop throughout the missions and campaigns you undertake. The back of the book contains a character sheet that holds all the data you'll need to quickly reference for your character. The character sheet may contain a bunch of numbers and other stats, but your character is more than that. The character is the combination of skills, inborn abilities, street smarts, and bleeding-edge gear that makes them dangerous—sometimes to others, sometimes to themselves, often to both. The numbers are there to give you a summary of your character's skills and abilities, and to provide the information you need to resolve the various tests that arise. As a player, though, you can work within the numbers and every other part of the character to create a vivid personality who is part of the ongoing drama of the Sixth World.

The building blocks below are the critical elements that help make your character who they are.

METATYPE

The first crucial element of a character is their metatype. People in the Sixth World belong to different strains of metahumanity, which means the hands attempting to strangle the life out of you come in a variety of shapes and sizes. During the Awakening, when magic returned to the world, humans started turning into the creatures out of fantasy and fairy tales, and these kinds of people are now common sights in many parts of the Sixth World. Your *Shadowrun* character will be one of five different types of being (called metatypes): human, elf, dwarf, ork, or troll. The game rules for each of these metatypes are described in **Creating a Shadowrunner**, p. 62.

Human (*Homo sapiens sapiens*) is the metatype that has been around the longest (well, with one possible exception). You know them, you love them, and if you're reading this there's a high probability that you are one. They are balanced in their abilities and tend to have a little larger portion of luck (represented by Edge) than other metatypes.

Dwarfs (*Homo sapiens pumilionis*), as you may guess, are shorter and stockier than humans. They tend to be quite strong and very resilient, able to recover from damage ranging from knocks to the head to doses of hemlock. Or knocks to the head with a club wrapped in hemlock leaves. Dwarfs are hard workers and tend to be highly valued by corporations, which means they are more deeply integrated into human society than the other metatypes. They still face discrimination due to their size, and they often have to take steps to make a world built for humans suitable for them.

Elves (*Homo sapiens nobilis*) are taller than humans, thinner, and have pointed ears. They have an extremely annoying knack for being more nimble than humans, and they generally are better looking to boot. They also have very long lifespans, and continue to look young into their forties and fifties. They have occasionally been known to lord those facts over humans, or anyone who comes within hearing range. While most elves emerged at the Awakening along with the other metatypes, there are rumors that a few elves were hiding somewhere during the magical ebb of the Fifth World, and they are far older than any creature has a right to be.

Orks (*Homo sapiens robustus*) look like the creatures that have been dying by the score in fantasy movies and trideos for almost one hundred fifty years. With protruding brows, prominent tusks, and a large stature, orks have trouble avoiding the stereotype of being unthinkingly violent brutes. It doesn't help that there are more than a few orks who are happy to live up to that stereotype rather than fight it. The end result is a certain underlying tension between orks and humans, which leads to both groups often preferring to live in separate communities. Elves and orks, on the other hand, often prefer to live in entirely separate countries. Despite the stereotypes, orks can be found in all walks of life, from dank alleys to corporate boardrooms. They have a shorter lifespan than humans, which often leads to them having a certain desperation to pack as much living into their years as they can.

Trolls (*Homo sapiens ingentis*) make orks look like the ordinary man on the street. Orks might be, on average, less than a quarter-meter taller than humans; trolls, by contrast, are more than a half-meter taller than orks. Orks might look like a monstrous version of humanity;

trolls, on the other hand, look like vaguely human versions of the creature from your most recent nightmare. With thick, curled horns on their heads (some trolls prefer to have them cut, while others polish them with pride), spiky protrusions of calcium on their joints, and individual muscles that are larger than a full-grown pig, trolls give the immediate impression that they are built for destruction. Most of them are able to live up to that image. Not all trolls, though, are about absorbing and inflicting damage. They have tried to find their way into different roles, but their large size combines with cultural stereotypes to make it hard for them to fit in. Orks tend to be the most accepting of trolls, and the two metatypes often inhabit the same neighborhoods. Typically these are not the most resource-rich neighborhoods in any given sprawl.

ATTRIBUTES

Attributes are the inherent characteristics of your shadowrunner, the basic abilities they bring to the table. Shadowrunners have a numerical rating for each attribute, which is used to help determine the amount of dice rolled for tests in the game. Attributes fall into three different groups: Physical, Mental, and Special. Every character has a rating in each of the Physical and Mental attributes, though they may not have ratings in the Special attributes.

For humans, all attributes are between 1 and 6, though certain modifications and qualities can change this. Metatypes have different ranges in these attributes, as seen on the table on p. 65.

PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES

BODY (BOD)

Body measures your physical health and resiliency. It affects how much damage you can take and stay on your feet, how well you resist damage coming your way, your ability to recover from poisons and diseases, and things of that nature.

AGILITY (AGI)

Agility measures things like hand-eye coordination, flexibility, nimbleness, and balance. Agility is the most important attribute when it comes to scoring hits during combat, as you need to be coordinated to land your blows, whether you're swinging a sword or carefully aiming a rifle. It also is critical in non-combat situations, such as sneaking quietly past security guards or smoothly lifting a keycard from its secured position.

REACTION (REA)

Reaction is about reflexes, awareness, and your character's ability to respond to events happening around them. Reaction plays an important role in deciding how soon characters act in combat and how skilled they are in avoiding attacks from others. It also helps you make that quick turn down a narrow alley on your cycle to avoid the howling gangers on your tail.

STRENGTH (STR)

Strength is an indicator of, well, how strong your character is. The higher your strength, the more damage you'll do when you're raining blows down on an opponent, and the more you'll be able to move or carry when there's stuff that needs to be moved. Or carried. Strength is also important with athletic tasks such as climbing, running, and swimming.

MENTAL ATTRIBUTES

WILLPOWER (WIL)

Willpower is your character's desire to push through adversity, to resist the weariness of spellcasting, and to stay upright after being nailed in the head with a sap. Whether you're testing yourself against a toxic wilderness or a pack of leather-clad orks with crowbars, Willpower will help you make it through.

LOGIC (LOG)

The Logic attribute measures the cold, calculating power of your rational mind. Whether you are attempting to repair complicated machinery or patch up an injured teammate, Logic helps you get things right. Logic is also the attribute hermetic mages use to resist Drain from the spells they rain down on their hapless foes. Deckers also find Logic extremely useful, as it helps them develop the attacks and counterattacks that are part of their online battles.

INTUITION (INT)

Intuition is the voice of your gut, the instinct that tells you things before your logical brain can figure them out. Intuition helps you anticipate ambushes, notice that something is amiss or out of place, and stay on the trail of someone you're pursuing.

CHARISMA (CHA)

Charisma is your force of personality, the persuasiveness and charm you can call on to get people to do what you want without having to go to the trouble of pulling a gun on them. It's not entirely about your appearance, but it's also not entirely *not* about your appearance. What it's mostly about is how you use what you have—your voice, your face, your words, and all the tools at your disposal—to charm and/or intimidate the people you encounter. Additionally, Charisma is an important attribute for shamanic mages, as it helps them resist the damaging Drain from spells they cast.

SPECIAL ATTRIBUTES

ESSENCE (ESS)

Essence is your metahumanity encapsulated in a number. In *Shadowrun*, you have ample opportunities to alter your body or push it beyond its normal limits. Such actions often have a cost, and they can result in a loss of a portion of your metahumanity, which means a loss of Essence points. Each character starts with an Essence rating of 6, and it acts as a cap on the amount of alterations you can adopt. When it's gone, it doesn't come back. It also affects the Magic and Resonance attributes, as losses in Essence are reflected by losses in Magic and Resonance.

While denizens of the Sixth World are accustomed to seeing a variety of augmentations and alterations to the metahuman form, the "uncanny valley" still exists. The uncanny valley is the disconcerting effect that happens when people see something that is almost, but not quite, metahuman. An animated cartoon with exaggerated features looks fine to metahuman eyes, but a computer program that closely, but not exactly, replicates human appearance is a troubling and unpleasant sight to most viewers. This is what happens when people see others with augmentations—on some level, people notice there is something less (or more) human about that, and they respond to it negatively. The change may not be exactly visible, but it is in some way noticeable—in one way or another, a person has become less human, and on some level other people notice this. This is why a character's Essence is included in the calculation of their Social limit.

EDGE (EDG)

Edge is the ultimate intangible, that certain something that provides a boost when you need it, that gets you out of a tough spot when the chips are down. It's not used to calculate dice pools; instead, you spend a point of Edge to acquire a certain effect. Every character has at least one point of Edge, more if they want to take more frequent advantage of the boosts it offers. The possible effects of and more details about Edge are on p. 56.

MAGIC (MAG)

If you intend to cast spells or use magic in any way, your character needs to have the Magic attribute. Most individuals do not have this attribute, meaning their rating is zero. Mages, who cast spells, and adepts, who channel magic into enhanced physical and mental abilities, need this quality. Their Magic rating measures how capable they are in the arcane arts and how much power they can draw down to help them in their efforts.

RESONANCE (RES)

Similar to Magic for mages and adepts, Resonance is the special attribute for technomancers. Technomancers interface with the Matrix using the power of their mind, and Resonance measures the strength of their ability to interact with and shape that environment (see **Technomancers**, p. 249). Non-technomancers have a zero rating for Resonance.

INITIATIVE AND CONDITION MONITORS

As is the case with limits (p. 46), Initiative and the Condition Monitors are character statistics derived from attributes. They should be calculated during the character creation process (p. 62).

INITIATIVE

Initiative governs how quickly a character responds in a combat situation. A character's Initiative attribute is their Reaction plus their Intuition.

INITIATIVE DICE

Initiative Dice, as described on p. 159, are extra dice used to roll a character's Initiative Score. They generally come from gear, spells, or adept powers. Everyone has one and can get up to four more (for a total of five) from various gear, spells, and other effects. Hackers get extra initiative dice depending on how they interact with the Matrix (see p. 214).

CONDITION MONITORS

Condition Monitors are used to track the damage inflicted on a character. Player characters have two Condition Monitors; one tracks Physical damage, the other tracks Stun damage. Each Condition Monitor has a specific number of boxes arrayed in rows of three boxes apiece. The Physical Condition Monitor has boxes equal to half the character's Body (rounded up) + 8; the Stun Condition Monitor has boxes equaling half the character's Willpower (rounded up) + 8.

When a row of the Condition Monitor is filled up, the player character takes a –1 penalty to all subsequent tests. This penalty stacks for each row of the Condition Monitor that is filled in.

Obviously, walking around with a damaged Condition Monitor is problematic, and characters will want healing as soon as possible. For possible methods of healing, see p. 205.

SKILLS

The other part of the dice pool equation, along with attributes, is a character's skills. Skills represent the knowledge and abilities the character has picked up throughout his life. Skills cover a wide variety of topics, such as the ability to shoot a gun, a proficiency with disguises, and a knack for repairing vehicles and machines. Skills come in two main categories: Active skills and Knowledge skills. Active skills cover the things

characters do, while Knowledge skills cover the facts and information the character has acquired over their career, including speaking languages other than their native tongue.

Skills are linked to a specific attribute, and the ratings of the skill and linked attribute, added together, form the dice pool for most tests. A list of skills ordered by their linked attributes can be found on p. 151.

Characters may attempt some skill-based tests even if they don't have any ranks in the skill. This is known as **defaulting**. For example, even if you're not trained in the art of running, you can still attempt a sprint to see just how much ground you can cover. In these instances, your dice pool for the test equals your ranking in the linked attribute – 1. So if Sorsha doesn't have the Running skill but wants to give a sprint a try, she'll check her Strength, which is 6. That means she rolls 6 – 1 dice, or 5, and hopes for the best.

There are some skills, though, for which tests cannot default if you don't have the appropriate skill—guts and a willingness to pitch in sometimes just aren't a substitute for actual abilities. All the can-do spirit in the world won't help you speak Russian if you don't have any knowledge of the language, or repair a car if you're not familiar with the basic workings of the machinery involved. It's nice to be able to do everything, but sometimes you have to wait for an expert. Skills where defaulting is not an option are indicated in italics on the table on p. 151.

QUALITIES

Along with attributes and skills, characters also have Qualities that can provide modifications to their character. Positive Qualities provide bonuses and require the expenditure of Karma at character creation; Negative Qualities inflict penalties but provide additional Karma the character can use to enhance her skills and attributes. Qualities have a range of effects, and they are described in detail on p. 71.

MAGIC

The return of magic to the world is one of the pivotal moments in *Shadowrun* history, and in the decades since its arrival, millions of people have looked for new ways to take advantage of the power it offers. Spellcasters are still a significant minority of the population, but magic has had a profound effect on the shape of the world. From the existence of magic divisions in the word's largest corps to hunts across the globe for rare magical reagents, from spells being slung in urban brawl to research being conducted in the highest halls of learning, magic has a place in all parts of Sixth World society.

As described in **Special Attributes** (p. 52), in order to have the ability to use magic, characters must have the Magic attribute so that they can become an adept, magician, aspected magician, or mystic adept. Adepts channel mana into improved physical and mental abilities, while magicians use it to power spells that can affect the world in a wide variety of ways. Mystic adepts are a hybrid of the two, dividing the mana they can access between spell power and physical and mental boosts.

More information about the uses of magic, including the spells and adept powers characters may use, can be found in the **Magic** chapter on p. 276.

MATRIX

The Matrix of the Sixth World is a continually evolving beast. After Crash 2.0 hit in 2064, the Matrix went wireless, and in the initial flush of excitement and access, the Matrix became more free and open than it had been in years. The corporations have reacted, though, and thanks to individuals rallying the populace on their behalf, the corporations have taken a degree of power over the Matrix that has not been seen for decades.

Control of the Matrix may have changed, but some of the basics have not. It's still vast, it's still used by almost everyone in the world, and it's still home to vast amounts of paydata (buried in vast swathes of nonsense and trideo footage of cats). One reason for the changes, though, was that the corporations had tired of hackers half a world away breaking into their systems. By placing tighter control over the Matrix, they can make it harder for long-distance hackers to do any damage. Additionally, executives have learned to store some of their private data in wired nodes, meaning that runners have to track down those specific pieces of machinery if they want a portion of that reward.

One of the results of this has been the return of the cyberdeck as the prime tool for hacking the Matrix. Commlinks are still around and used by almost everybody, but the new Matrix design requires a new tool, and hackers were quick to name the tool the cyberdeck after the legendary hacking tool of old. They also reclaimed the title of deckers for themselves.

Cyberdecks are not what they once were. They are smaller, more powerful, and able to function as part of a wireless network. Deckers can use them in both of the Matrix's standard environments: Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality.

AUGMENTED REALITY

Augmented reality (AR) takes the real world and overlays it with multimedia information to make that world more visually interesting and more functional. At its simplest, AR is a series of windows and virtual screens, called Augmented Reality Objects, or AROs, that float in front of a user's vision like mostly opaque, incredibly thin virtual computer monitors. On the more detailed level, AR dresses up every bit of the physical world, providing a bit

of extra shine and sparkle, even putting objects in your vision that don't appear in reality. They can also be used to alter your own appearance, giving you a different look without having to go through the hassle of actual physical changes. (Of course, you can't expect AR overlays to serve as an effective disguise—in any crowd, it seems there's always at least one person who likes to see the world without an overlay of graphic ornamentation and will not be affected by any computer graphics you overlay on yourself). These objects can be about more than mere decoration—they can provide information and interactive activities for the viewer. For example, pressing the keys on the overlaid cash register in a store allows you to check out your own items, removing store clerks from the transaction. "Pressing" an ARO sign in an office building can reveal a directory of the building's occupants. As long as you have some way to allow your commlink or cyberdeck to send you visual information—such as cybereyes, eyeglasses, or goggles—then you can see the AR information the Matrix has to offer.

Deckers may prefer virtual reality to AR, but they need to be skilled at working in AR environments if they want to be truly successful. The nature of the Matrix (see p. 214) means that they need to be mobile, often getting physically close to the locations they want to hack. Hacking on the move is often more efficiently done through AR, since it allows you to keep a foot in meatspace while getting your work done.

VIRTUAL REALITY

Virtual Reality (VR) is the full immersion in electronic environments. By 2075, this has gone far beyond visual representations accompanied by the occasional rumble or vibration. As long as runners have the right gear, they can get a full range of sensory experiences in VR, from feeling the emotions of people in a trideo to smelling the burning rubber on plascrete as the sports car they're driving peels out. Riggers and hackers in particular wouldn't be caught using anything besides a virtual environment in their work. The response time it offers and the full spectrum of sensory feedback allows them to react quickly and launch attacks as fast as possible. While hacking in AR is possible, especially for quick-hit efforts while a team is on the move, much of the heavy lifting is done in VR.

GEAR

A good runner can survive on nothing but her wits—but she'd rather not. The equipment a shadowrunner uses can be critical to the success of her mission, and knowing the right goods to bring along (and how to keep the less-legal ones from being detected) is an important skill. The gear shadowrunners may carry includes a full range of firearms, melee weapons like saps and swords, armor, eye and ear enhancements, surveillance and counter-surveillance gear, commlinks, cyberdecks, grenades, and more. The gear may cost a pile of nuyen and may not be legally available in all jurisdictions, but a good shadowrunner knows how to find what they need, no matter what.

Along with the standard gear shadowrunners carry, there are augmentations they can build into themselves, making these pieces of gear fully part of their body. There are two primary types of augmentations: cyberware and bioware.

CYBERWARE

Cyberware is the fusion of man and machine, the combination of metahumanity and technology that helps people break through the boundaries of what used to be impossible. Cyberware may take the form of eye or ear implants that provide better sensory reception while also offering recording capabilities; wires built into someone's muscle and nervous system that allow them to act with inhuman speed; armor built into skin; and more.

The performance improvements cyberware offers come with a cost (besides the nuyen you have to lay out to purchase and install the gear). Every piece of cyberware takes away a bit of your humanity, which is represented by a loss of a character's Essence (see p. 52). Since Essence is important to spellcasters, adepts, and technomancers (every point of Essence they lose comes with a corresponding loss of Magic or Resonance), it is rare to see Awakened or Emergeed individuals with extensive implants. Additionally, runners who serve as the face of the team may want to keep away from radical cyberware, as some Mr. Johnsons and everyday citizens don't respond well to the inhuman look it can generate. On top of all that, an abundance of cyberware can impede magical healing.

The Essence loss cyberware inflicts can be controlled, to a degree, by using the different grades of cyberware. There are three grades of custom cyberware that offer the same benefits as standard cyberware, but with reduced Essence loss (though significantly increased prices). These grades are alphaware, betaware, and deltaware. Betaware and deltaware are not available to starting characters. For more information on these grades, see p. 451.

People with cyberware know a simple truth—what they have generally makes them better, stronger, and faster than other people, and other people don't like that. Security types are especially suspicious since the purpose and capabilities of cyberware aren't always apparent. All of which means there are all sorts of laws and restrictions concerning the installation and use of cyberware augmentations. Most airlines, for example, require travelers to deactivate their cyberware before they board a plane, and to leave it off for the duration of the flight. Runners who install cyberware should be aware of the regulations controlling its use and be prepared to comply with them—or plan to break the rules in ways that draw as little unwanted attention as possible.

BIOWARE

While cyberware improves metahumans by building machinery into them, bioware uses flesh, muscle, and other organic materials to bring similar benefits. Since it is biological in nature, bioware has less impact on Essence than cyberware, but it is also more expensive and harder to find. It still introduces foreign elements and the impression of inhumanity to individuals, though, so the Social limit tied to Essence loss remains.

If a player wants to further reduce Essence loss, she can opt for cultured bioware, which uses her own cells as the source material for the augmentation. As might be imagined, this makes cultured bioware very compatible with the individual, but it also makes it heinously expensive. Runners will have to dive into a lot of shadows to be able to afford it, but a lot of them believe it's absolutely worth it.

CONTACTS

The Matrix is full of information, but the things shadowrunners need to know are not the kinds of things people put up on their personal or corporate websites. Word of available jobs, news about what street lowlifes and organized crime figures have been up to, dirt about who's just snuck into town and who may be looking to make a quick getaway—this is stuff you're not going to find through a quick data search.

To get this information, you need **contacts**. Contacts come in a lot of forms. They may be the arms dealer who has a knack for coming up with armor-piercing bullets right when you need them. Or the underground journalist who is willing to share what she knows if you give her some inside info about upcoming juicy stories. Or the old standby, the bartender with the watchful eye and the listening ear.

Shadowrunners have a roster of personal contacts that they can turn to in order to help them find jobs and provide useful information about what's going on in the world. Contacts have the same types of statistics that other characters would have, but they also have two special statistics that describe their relationship to player characters. Their **Loyalty** rating measures the closeness of their relationship to a character, while their **Connection** rating illustrates how well connected they are to the world around them. The Loyalty rating ranges from 1 to 6 while the Connection rating ranges from 1 to 12.

Player characters are allowed to purchase a certain amount of contacts during character creation (see **Contacts**, p. 98). After that, future contacts cannot be bought—they have to be earned. Through their actions, characters can build a relationship with a contact that results in a productive exchange of information. Note that contacts do not have to be friends with the player character, or even like them. They just have to understand that there may be a benefit to sharing information with the character.

For more information on contacts as well as some sample contact characters, see p. 386.

LIFESTYLE

Some shadowrunners are in the business to right wrongs or to get revenge. There are a few in the business because they are utter psychopaths. For the rest, though, shadowrunning is mainly a matter of survival. They're not willing to sell their souls to the corps, and they know that begging will get them nowhere. So they scrape up money any way they can so that they can pay for the basics of life—food, shelter, and maybe a little fun from time to time.

A character's lifestyle represents the money they have to spend to live in the way they have selected. This can range from the homeless life of someone scraping up whatever food and temporary shelter they can get their hands on to those who live like the lords of the sprawl, dwelling in walled-off palaces or airy condominiums that flaunt the extravagance the owner has earned. Most shadowrunners, of course, are far closer to the former than the latter.

More information about lifestyles, including their costs, can be found on p. 373.

EDGE

Edge is a character's luck, the favor of the gods, that unexplainable factor that allows her to beat the odds. A character's Edge attribute represents the number of Edge points a character has to spend during game play. Edge points can be used for a wide range of benefits, as listed below. Edge points that are spent are temporarily unavailable (see **Regaining Edge**, at right), as luck will only take you so far. A character's Edge attribute never actually changes, even when Edge points are spent, unless the character permanently burns Edge (see **Burning Edge**, p. 57).

EDGE EFFECTS

Edge can affect your character's world in a lot of ways. When you want one of these effects to happen, you must spend a point of Edge. A character can only spend Edge points on her own actions; she cannot spend it on behalf of others. No more than 1 point of Edge can be spent on any specific test or action at one time. If you spent a point of Edge for extra dice and rolled a critical glitch anyway, for example, you cannot use Edge to negate that critical glitch since you have already applied Edge to that test. The uses of Edge are:

- **Push the Limit:** Add your Edge rating to your test, either before or after the roll. This can allow you to take tests that might otherwise have a dice pool of zero or less thanks to various modifiers in play. Using Edge in this way makes the **Rule of Six** come into play: for every 6 you roll, count it as a hit and then re-roll that die, adding any additional hits from the re-roll to your total. If you decide to use this function after your initial roll, only your Edge dice use the Rule of Six. This use of Edge also allows you to ignore any limit on your test.
- **Second Chance:** Re-roll all dice that did not score a hit on a test roll. Second Chance cannot be used to negate a glitch or critical glitch, it does not use the Rule of Six, and it has no effect on limits.
- **Seize the Initiative:** Move to the top of the initiative order, regardless of your Initiative Score. If multiple characters spend Edge to go first in the same Combat Turn, those characters go before everybody else, in order of their Initiative Scores; subsequently, the other players and NPCs take their actions according to their Initiative Scores. This move to the top of the order lasts for the entire Combat Turn (meaning multiple Initiative Passes); you return to your normal place in Initiative order at the start of the following Combat Turn.
- **Blitz:** Roll the maximum of five Initiative Dice for a single Combat Turn.
- **Close Call:** Either negate the effects of one glitch or turn a critical glitch into a glitch.
- **Dead Man's Trigger:** When your character is about to fall unconscious or die, you can spend a point of Edge to make a Body + Willpower (3) test. If you succeed, you may spend any remaining actions you have on a single action before your character blacks out.

REGAINING EDGE

Your character gets one point of Edge back after a fulfilling meal and a good night's sleep (at least eight hours); additionally, the gamemaster can reward players by refreshing a single point of Edge in exchange for inventive or entertaining actions in the course of a gaming session. Incidentally, that's *refreshed* Edge points, not free Edge points—you can't go higher than your maximum Edge. Luck only counts if you use it.

- Good roleplaying.
- Heroic acts of self-sacrifice.
- Achievement of important personal goals.
- Enduring a critical glitch without using a Close Call (you get a point of Edge back to balance the scales a bit; this should be used judiciously, though, so as not to always let the players off the hook when they roll a critical glitch).
- Succeeding in an important objective.
- Being particularly brave or smart.
- Pushing the storyline forward.
- Having the right skills in the right place at the right time.
- Impressing the group with humor or drama.

BURNING EDGE

Sometimes it's not enough just to spend a point of Edge and hope for the best. Sometimes you need guaranteed results—or a miracle. In those circumstances, you can choose to burn a point of Edge, meaning it is gone and will not be recovered through the normal means (though in the future you can spend Karma to move your Edge up again). Burning a point of Edge has two potential uses:

- **Smackdown:** Automatically succeed in an action with four net hits. This has to be an action the character is capable of performing—he cannot, for example, score a success in a skill like Automotive Mechanic if he does not have ranks in that skill. Limits have no effect on this—the character gets four net hits regardless of the applicable limit.
- **Not Dead Yet:** There are circumstances—a bullet to the brain, a live grenade in the pants—that by all rights should result in a shadowrunner's inevitable death. In these cases, a player may elect to burn a point of Edge in order to keep her character alive, against all odds. Note that this does not mean she entirely avoids the effects of the potentially fatal action. The bullet still hits their head, and the grenade still goes off. Instead of dying, though, the character manages to keep breathing somehow and maintain a thin thread of a pulse, giving others a chance to stabilize her and hopefully provide some quick healing. The gamemaster should devise the exact circumstances that lead to the character surviving the current threat.

EXAMPLE

Takouba has security guards closing in on him from every direction, a bullet in his leg, and only one way out—a hallway guarded by a dwarf with a big gun. He has absolutely no time to waste, so he burns a point of Edge to shoot the guard with his Colt Cobra. He has the Automatics skill, but in this case he could use this ability even if he didn't, as this is a skill he could default in, just using his Agility –1. The point is, this is something he can do. He doesn't need to check anything else, including his gun's Accuracy, and neither he nor the target roll dice to see if he hit. He is counted as having four net hits on the attack. The base Damage Value of his weapon is 7P; the four net hits raise it to 11P. The dwarf now has to roll to see if he can resist 11P worth of damage. Takouba sincerely hopes the damage will be enough to at least put the guard off balance so he can make his escape.

OPTIONAL RULES

While the rules of *Shadowrun, Fifth Edition* were designed to provide a fun, balanced gaming experience, no one set of rules can take into account every individual's preferences. To that end, optional rules are provided in the book that you might choose to use in your game. Some make the game move faster; others provide a more detailed, simulationist approach to *Shadowrun*. Gamemasters should feel free to use the rules that suit them, and tweak existing rules as they see fit.

GIRLS WITH GUNS

All I wanted was a damn omelet and a cup of coffee. Sadly, Allen's Diner in sunny, downtown Tacoma didn't serve coffee—they served soykaf. I've had both, and it's just not the same. Yeah, the real stuff will cost you, but isn't it worth it to once in a while have something *good*? And not fake? But at least their omelets more than made up for it, so I dealt with the disappointment. I shelled out enough for real eggs, because the substitutes are just this side of inedible, and they stuffed the real ones with soyrizo and real onions and bell peppers and a ridiculous amount of rice-based faux-pepper jack cheese. Heaven on a plate right there.

I got started in the shadows at a place like this. Been five years now. I was out on the street; the army and I had parted company on less-than-cordial terms a few weeks earlier, and while I'd managed to avoid time in the stockade, a bad conduct discharge made it hard to find a legitimate job. A lot of the corps didn't want the risk of someone like me, who'd struck a superior officer, no matter how justified it might have been at the time. It speaks of a bad attitude, which in corp-speak means not bowing down to your corporate masters. Can't have that.

So there I was, way back when, trying not to look too desperate, tightening my belt in an alley behind some diner in Puyallup, competing with a dozen or so other homeless people for scraps. I guess one of the employees at that diner saw something in me—my bearing, maybe, or the armor jacket I'd managed to liberate before the army gave me the boot—and she motioned me to her side. "You want to earn some cred?" she asked.

"Yeah," I told her, trying to keep my voice from sounding too eager. I figured what was coming wasn't going to be good, but I also figured I wasn't in a position to be picky. "What do you need me to do?"

She looked me up and down a little bit more, then waved me into the kitchen. "Sit tight," she said, and told one of the others in the kitchen crew to get me a sandwich. She disappeared for a moment, then came back to get me. She led me up front to one of the booths. It was in a dark corner, away from the doors and windows. The only person sitting there was an ork with a couple of datajacks in his head, a commlink sitting next to a cup of something that might have been coffee.

He looked me up and down like the woman had done back in the alley, then he said, "Have a seat." I climbed up into the booth—it really wasn't built with a dwarf like me in mind, but I've had to deal with worse inconveniences in my

BY PATRICK GOODMAN

life—and the woman refilled his cup and set one down in front of me. I finished the sandwich she'd gotten for me in silence; the ork waited patiently for me.

"You got any skills?" he asked me with a voice that sounded like gravel in a blender.

"I drove a truck in the army," I said.

"The army adapts vehicles for dwarfs?" He seemed genuinely interested.

I nodded. "Yeah. Sometimes I had to do it myself, but it wasn't that big a deal."

He made a motion in an AR window he had up, then nodded. "You have any problems with shooting someone if the situation calls for it?"

I looked him over for a minute. He was interviewing me for a shadowrun. Actual shadow work, the big time. At least that's what I thought then. When you're down as far as I was, even the gutter looks like a step up. "I'm not gonna kill anybody for you, but if it's defending myself or my team ... no, I can pull the trigger." I felt my cheeks flush. "I don't have a piece, though."

He nodded. "This isn't wetwork; I try to stay away from that sort of thing." He made a few more gestures. "It so happens I need a driver. I've got the ride and the crew, though you'll have to do your own mods." He waved aside the AR window and looked me in the eyes. I didn't flinch away. "Pay's a thousand, half up front. It goes down day after tomorrow; give me your commcode and I'll get you the particulars." I gave it to him, then he continued. "You're going to want to be armed, though, so your up-front won't be cash this time around. You have a doss?"

I nodded. "After a fashion." I let him know where I was crashing, and he said he'd send someone over with my payment. He told me to get another sandwich to go before I left, and then he got up, put his commlink in his pocket, and walked away. I got another sandwich and made my way back to my squat. I fell asleep wondering what the hell I'd gotten myself into. The next morning I woke up with a box next to me. It had a note that said, "Frank, here's your up-front. Hauser."

I hadn't given him my name.

I opened the box and stared at the huge fragging pistol it contained. It was a Predator IV, still in its factory packaging, matte-black and just as deadly as it looked. The grip was scaled to fit my hand; the box also held two extra clips, a shoulder holster, and a box of ball rounds.

True to his word, Hauser sent me a message with an address and a time. I turned up on time, and got to spend

the afternoon modifying the driver's side of a Bulldog van so I could drive the damn thing. I met the team, and the next day we went and liberated a dozen cases big enough to hold assault rifles. To this day, I don't know what was in them; it wasn't part of my job to know, and I realized I didn't much care.

I didn't have to shoot anyone that time around. I got a credstick with five hundred nuyen later that night. Hauser asked if I wanted more work; I allowed as to how I did.

I got to keep the pistol. I still carry that piece. I should have tossed it ages ago, but I've almost never had to fire it in anger and I'm sentimental. Probably going to get me killed one of these days, but so far I've managed to keep body and soul together.

I come to Allen's these days to get the hell away from the shadows. It's a way to connect to what I laughingly refer to as reality, the life I used to lead before I became a runner. I don't know why; it wasn't a great life. Like I said, I'm sentimental sometimes.

I staggered into the diner at about half past eleven; the lunch rush hadn't started yet, but there was still a pretty good crowd. I climbed up on my usual barstool and looked around. Regulars, mostly; some looked at me and nodded, some scowled. One woman in particular, an ork somewhere between thirty and three hundred years old, actually muttered a curse, spat on the floor, and got up and walked to a different section of the diner. We knew each other; I'd been driving a job where her son, a basically good kid trying to claw his way out of the soulless poverty of his childhood, had gotten shot up. He was in a coma in a hospital across town; I wondered if Hauser's operation still paid his medical bills, but I doubted it. I'm sentimental, but Hauser—Hauser's one of those guys who thinks emotions just get in the way.

The waitress, an older human lady named Charlotte, set a cup of soykaf in front of me without having to ask what I wanted. She smiled at me, read my omelet order back to me before I'd even made it, and sent it to the kitchen while I chided myself for my predictability. I was going to have to shake up my routine one of these days. But the omelets were so damn good.

I noticed this girl walk in the door and start hitting up customers for loose change. Panhandling sucks, but even in this bright shiny electronic age of ours, there's still corp scrip and coinage floating around. It's hard to keep body and soul together, but it didn't seem to me she'd resorted to flat-backing just yet. She held her head up a little high for that.

She hadn't made it over to my side of the diner when trouble walked in. By "trouble walked in," of course, I mean, "a dumb fraggin' ganger with a pink mohawk rode a damn Harley Scorpion through the door and unloaded a Remington Roomsweeper into the ceiling."

All I wanted was a goddamn omelet.

I bowed my head and closed my eyes. Knight Errant didn't come out this way very often; besides the eggs, that was one of the reasons I liked the place so much. I wasn't a cop. I used to drive a truck in the army; now I drove a truck for Mr. Johnson. I was a shadowrunner. I shot people in the face for money. Figuratively, anyway.

But this was my place, dammit. This is where I came to get away from craziness like this. A dozen of Pink Mohawk's close friends and relations had joined him by this time, terrorizing the customers and the staff. I didn't recognize their colors; whoever they were, they were away from their turf. This was a problem, because while KE didn't patrol the neighborhood, we did have the Spikes, and they didn't take kindly to motorcycle-riding thugs that weren't them. These punks were trying to make a statement to those punks, and before too long things were going to get even messier.

Dammit.

They were starting to make their way to my side of the diner. Most of the crowd was hiding under their tables or behind the counter. Most everybody but me and the panhandler. She had tucked herself into a corner by the counter, but she wasn't cowering behind it. She was watching the gangers shake down the customers and tear random shit apart. I saw something in her face that I hadn't seen in a while. She was scared ... but it wasn't running her. She was scared, but she was also angry. She was looking for a way to stand her ground.

I smiled a little then, and she gave me a funny look, like she was trying to figure out what the hell was wrong with me. She cocked her head at about the same time I felt Pink Mohawk walking up beside me. Like the other mouth-breathers he rode with, he was hooting and hollering and generally acting like his size and the pistol-sized shotgun he was carrying were going to be enough to leave me shaking in my boots.

He was way too close. He wouldn't be able to get off a shot before I could put my fist in his solar plexus. "All right, old man, gimme your stick and your link!"

Old man, my ass. I looked up at him—I'm a dwarf, I look up at a lot of things—and got my first good look at the punk. Jesus. He was barely old enough to shave. I tried to play it cool, to keep him focused on me, but I really wished some of my team were there with me. I was on my own, though. Mostly. "There's still time to call this off and get out of here with all of your organs." I flipped a switch in my head and felt my body light up as I got ready.

Yeah, mostly I drive. It's not *all* I do, though. The wires help me in a fight almost as much as they help me behind the wheel.

The punk scoffed, and pointed the Roomsweeper at my head. "I said gimme your stick, old man!"

My left fist shot into his belly like a cobra, doubling him over and knocking the breath out of him. He didn't even have a chance to cry out. He *did* have time to pull the trigger, but by that time he was no longer aiming the gun at my head; he took a divot out of the floor as he went down. I chopped the back of his head to help him along. I jumped down from my stool, drawing my Predator as my combat boots found the back of Pink Mohawk's jacket. I was looking for my first real target when I felt a pair of hammers hit me in the ceramic plates that reinforced the armor in my jacket. I staggered backward and tripped as my foot caught on Mohawk's collar.

One of them had shot me. It was a heavy pistol, but the report didn't sound like a high-quality piece. Something cheap made in a nanoforge or a sweatshop in Vladivostok, probably, though if it had hit me in the head, I'd be just as dead. I came down hard on the diner's tile floor. I lost my grip on the Predator as the back of my head met the tile; I could hear it skidding away as stars began dancing in my vision. I shook it off and looked for another weapon as one of the other gangers approached to finish what she'd started. My hand found the barrel of Mohawk's Roomsweeper; I yanked it into one hand, got my other hand around the grip, and I was aiming at the punk who shot me when she staggered backward and dropped like a stone down a well.

I recognized the report of the weapon that dropped her; it was my Predator. I looked back, and saw the young dwarf girl standing there, in a passable stance with both hands on the grip. She looked surprised, but determined. I smiled again, a little wider this time, and stood up to face the surprised remnants of the gang with Mohawk's gun in my hand and my boot on the back of his head.

Funny thing about most gangs: A lot of them don't really want a real fight. They want to beat people up and terrorize them. Faced with actual resistance, most of them will tuck their tails and run. This one was no different; they lit out of Allen's like a dragon was chasing them as soon as they figured out that their boss was down. I dragged Mohawk and the girl who'd shot me—she wasn't dead, but she was going to be sore as hell when she came around—and dumped them both in the gutter. The bike I pushed out and toppled over next to them. I walked back in, and found the girl slumped into a booth, my Predator sitting on the table in front of her. I picked it up and holstered it, then looked around the diner. Someone had almost certainly hit a PANICBUTTON™, and the Knights would show up soon, regular patrols or not. It would be much better for me if I weren't there when they arrived.

I looked back to the girl. "You hungry?"

She nodded.

I motioned toward the kitchen, and the back door. "I think I owe you lunch, at least, but we should probably get it someplace else." I handed her the punk's Roomsweeper. "Come on, I know a place."

She tucked the pistol into a jacket pocket and followed me to the parking lot. We both piled into the beat-up pickup I was driving and headed away from Allen's as quickly as I could without attracting attention. I'd been right; Knight Errant cops were already pulling up to the place, lights blazing. We passed a couple of their cruisers going back the way we came. I turned the truck and headed for Puyallup.

The girl was silent for most of the drive. I rummaged through the truck's console and found a certified credstick with a couple of hundred nuyen on it and handed it to her. "You earned this," I said. "Thanks for saving my ass back there."

She took it without expression, then said, "You're welcome." She looked at the stick. "Where are we going?" she asked. I don't know what she was thinking, either about me or the situation in general. She seemed wary, but she didn't act like she thought I was one of the bad guys.

"Another diner, a lot like that one. Omelets aren't as good, but they have pretty good sandwiches." We drove a little further in silence, then I pulled into the parking lot at the same diner I'd been scrounging behind five years ago when I'd started down this crazy road.

I stopped the truck, then looked at her before I got out. "You need a job? I know a guy."

A look of wary hope showed in her eyes. "Yeah. Beats starving."

I chuckled. "Don't I know it."

We climbed down from the truck and walked into the diner by the front door. I scanned the crowd, and sure enough, I saw Hauser holding court in his usual corner booth. He acknowledged me with a nod, but someone was sitting opposite him, so I motioned the girl to a barstool and we both sat down. A waitress took our order, and the girl dug into her sandwich with gusto when it arrived.

Hauser's guest finally rose and left; I excused myself and walked over to the booth. Hauser was looking rougher every day, but that happens with orks. They get old before the rest of us. I know he had a son somewhere whom he was presumably grooming to take over the family business, but I'd never met him. Hauser greeted me warmly and asked how my last job had gone. He knew the answer, of course, but there are forms to follow in this work.

I motioned with my head toward the girl, and said, "Got someone looking for work. She's got moxie, if nothing else." I told him about what had just happened over at Allen's; he nodded approvingly and motioned her over.

I turned to leave, and smiled at the girl as she passed me. I heard her climb into the booth, and heard Hauser's raspy voice ask her, "You got any skills?"

CREATING A SHADOWRUNNER

SAY IT WITH ME, NOW:

Watch your back!
Shoot straight!
Conserve ammo!
Never deal with a dragon!

Those are the fundamental rules for surviving in the *Shadowrun* world. Beyond that, individuals have their own rules—codes, or lack thereof. There are people who steal from the rich and give to the poor, and people who steal from the rich and laugh at the poor. People who are flamboyant, pulling off capers in grand style, and people who are never seen, not for a second, by those they don't want to see them.

The point is, there are all types of shadowrunners out there, and it is time now to create one and take to the streets of 2075. Take your best shot, fight the odds, hope for the best, and show everyone you have the guts and the skills to do the impossible. You may never be accepted in "civilized" society, but you can take pride in the fact that you've earned everything you own—including your freedom.

STEP ONE: CHOOSE CONCEPT

The sidebar **Common Character Concepts and their Roles Explained** gives you a snapshot of the character types your most likely to find in the shadows. Disparate characters band together as runner teams; blending their talents, skills, and specialized expertise to complete missions they would not be able to pull off as individuals. Some runner teams come together for a specific job, while others stay together throughout their entire careers, becoming as close-knit as family. This gallery is just a starting point—there are characters in the shadows that don't conform to any list. The one you create will be uniquely yours.

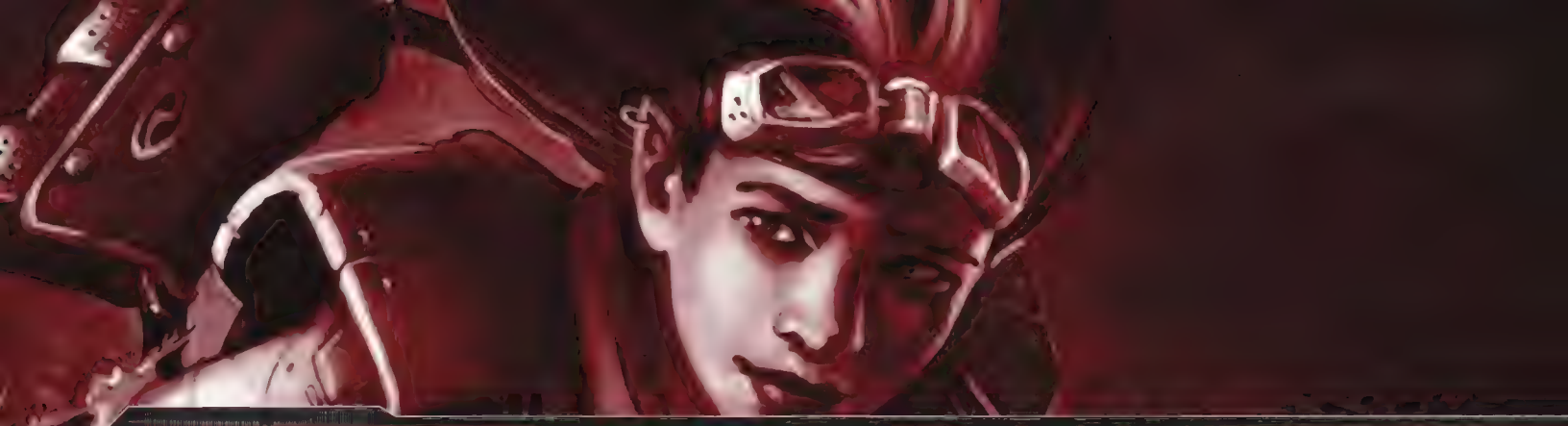
TIPS FOR CHARACTER CREATION

A spreadsheet, word processing document, or pen and paper will help keep things clear and organized as you go through the character creation process. Organization makes it easier to track the priorities you have selected for your character, along with your Karma expenditures. It will also prove useful in calculating Essence and other elements as well as subtracting costs from your resources. As you go through character creation, note any bonuses you receive from Qualities and augmentations on the character sheet, as these may modify the statistics of the character at the end of the character creation process.

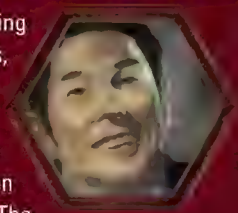
Character creation involves many decisions, from choosing the right skills to purchasing the appropriate gear. It could take as little as an hour to build a character or as long as an evening. It is helpful to have an idea of what you want to play and what you want your character to do before getting together for a home game of *Shadowrun*.

You may start with an idea of what sort of character you want to play and some basic background concepts. The character may be an ex-soldier from a national government looking to use her combat skills on the streets. Or a former corporate headhunter forced out of the megacorporation by an ambitious rival and now using his negotiating savvy and deal-making skills to survive the shadows. There are second-generation runners, born to the life and learning the skills of the trade from their SINless parents. It's not unusual for a bounty hunter who collects pelts of paranormal critters or tracks down fugitives to engage in a little shadowrunning to supplement his income. The character may have grown up in a street gang, and he sees shadowrunning as a way to get out of the gutter. Or the character may have just gotten out of jail and be eager to see what she can do with the skills she learned and the connections she made on the inside.

You do not need to understand all the nuances of character creation and character statistics to get start-



COMMON CHARACTER TYPES AND THEIR ROLES



Face: The face runs his fingers over the thrumming strings of other people's wants and needs, playing them like a maestro. He is master of the con, a polished negotiator, and often an expert leader. Interacting with Mr. Johnson during the meet is his specialty, especially when it comes to bargaining for the greatest profit. The face also excels at legwork, coaxing or squeezing vital information from a variety of sources that could help make sure his job is a success. Though the face usually manages to get what he wants with charm and a smile, he knows how to be more forceful to get people to cough up their secrets. Words are the face's weapon of choice and Charisma and Willpower are the face's two important attributes—but he has no problem using an Ares Predator when the situation warrants.

Spellcaster: A manabolt to your chest, a fireball in your face—that's what the spellcaster brings to the table in combat. And he does so much more. He manipulates and channels mana, an energy field that is the essence of magic. Mana can be manipulated in several different ways, allowing for different types of spellcasters. Magicians follow a more logical and ordered system of magic, while shamans rely more on their instincts and intuition. To make a spellcaster, a player needs to select a priority that grants a Magic attribute rating (see **Priority Table**, p. 65). Depending on the tradition, Charisma or Intuition can be important attributes for spellcasters, and Willpower is an important attribute for resisting Drain.

Decker: The trickster in the Matrix, the flash of lightning in the corner of your virtual eye—a decker specializes in hacking into computers, commlinks, and datahavens. Her job often involves stealing, altering, and manipulating data as well as taking control of or modifying security systems so her teammates can get in and out of defended facilities. A good decker knows her work may put her right in the middle of heated action, and she knows how to react. Whether she's firing a weapon, disabling the weapons of others, or sending every electronic device in a place on the attack, she has a whole bunch of options to keep herself involved in unfolding combat. A decker never travels without her cyberdeck (p. 227), the tool of her trade. Logic, Intuition, and Willpower can be important attributes for the decker character.

Technomancer: Some people hack the Matrix with physical tools, but a few have the ability to log on with nothing more than their minds. These people are technomancers. A technomancer can access the Matrix with his mind through an intrinsic connection that's not fully understood, even in 2075—though plenty of people would pay plenty to figure out how it works. A player who wishes to play a technomancer must select an option on the **Priority Table** (p. 65) that gives the character a Resonance attribute. Logic, Intuition, and Willpower can be important attributes for the technomancer.

Rigger: Some people drive cars; other people use vehicles as an extension of their body, like an additional set of limbs. A rigger is a professional driver, an ace controller of all sorts of machines. She is highly skilled in the operation, repair, and customization of all sorts of vehicles and/or drones, offering surveillance, transportation, and remote firepower to their team. Reaction is a critical attribute for riggers.

Street Samurai: Some artists work in watercolors, some in oils. The street samurai is an artist of pain. In any given situation, he knows fifteen ways to hurt an opponent, and an additional eight ways to hurt an opponent *real bad.* He can take significant amounts of damage and stay standing, leveling devastating damage on her opponents. He typically is augmented with significant amounts of cyberware and bioware to make him exceptionally tough and dangerous in physical and armed combat. While he is ferocious and deadly, he tends to have a code—it may be a code comprehensible only to him, but it's something. Body, Strength, and Agility are important attributes for characters that are street samurai.

ed. That will come with time. To start, have a concept in mind and dive in. Your character will quickly become unique—and all yours.

Players and the gamemaster should work together to develop a team of characters that are suited to the campaign. The character creation rules as presented in this chapter involve the creation of an experienced shadowrunner. For rules on the other levels of character creation (street level, prime runner), see the **Alternate Gameplay Sidebar**.

All characters in *Shadowrun* start with 25 Karma they will use to improve themselves. They'll get plenty of other resources as they move through the process.

EXAMPLE

GETTING STARTED

James, Rob, and Kyra are putting together new characters for a *Shadowrun* game. Their gamemaster is Michael. After talking with the players about what they are looking for in a game, Michael has determined that the starting level will be experienced runner (the default level). James has decided he wishes to play a technomancer who grew up on the streets. Rob wants to put together a street samurai, whose background includes service in the military of the United Canadian American States (UCAS). Kyra has chosen to be a SINless mystic adept, combining the abilities of spellslinging with a body enhanced by magic abilities. Kyra has also decided to add some social skills to her repertoire.

James, Rob and Kyra have determined the following qualities are important to their characters. Later in the character creation process, they may select other qualities to purchase that will work well with the characters' attributes and skills.

JAMES

Technomancer

Natural Hardening (Cost: 10 Karma)

ROB

Street Samurai

SINner [National]: (Bonus: 5 Karma)

Exceptional Attribute [Strength]: (Cost: 14 Karma)

[Dependent on gamemaster approval]

KYRA

Mystic Adept

Mentor Spirit (Cost: 5 Karma)

Focused Concentration [Rating 2] (Cost: 8 Karma)

ALTERNATE GAMEPLAY

Shadowrun provides players with two alternate ways of building characters besides the normal experienced players. The first is for street-level characters; characters that have not yet had a chance to establish themselves as runners and are still in the process of earning their street cred. Obviously, these characters will not have the same gear or resources as the experienced shadowrunner. The second option is the prime runner build to create a character who has successfully been running the shadows long enough to have established their reputations as professionals in the eyes of Mr. Johnson. They possess the gear, the connections, and the talent to back up those reputations. The following are the rules for each level of alternate game play:

STREET-LEVEL PLAY

- **Modify the resources column on the Priority Table as follows:**
  - **Priority A:** 75,000 nuyen
  - **Priority B:** 50,000 nuyen
  - **Priority C:** 25,000 nuyen
  - **Priority D:** 15,000 nuyen
  - **Priority E:** 6,000 nuyen
- **Karma:** Each player receives 13 Karma to customize characters (maximum of 26 Karma).
- **Gear Restrictions:** Device Ratings must be rated at 4 or less. Maximum Availability is limited to 10 or less.
- **Nuyen Restrictions:** Characters may only convert up to 5 Karma into nuyen (10,000 nuyen).
- Follow all other rules for Character Creation/Advancement as laid out in this chapter.

PRIME RUNNER PLAY

- **Modify the resources column on the Priority Table as follows:**
  - **Priority A:** 500,000 nuyen
  - **Priority B:** 325,000 nuyen
  - **Priority C:** 210,000 nuyen
  - **Priority D:** 150,000 nuyen
  - **Priority E:** 100,000 nuyen
- **Karma:** Each player receives 35 Karma to customize characters (maximum of 70 Karma).
- **Gear Restrictions:** Device Ratings must be rated at 6 or less. Maximum Availability is 15 or less.
- **Nuyen Restrictions:** Characters may convert up to 25 Karma into nuyen (50,000 nuyen).
- **Karma Restrictions:** Instead of the normal Charisma x 3 Karma for contacts, increase this amount to Charisma x 6 Karma for contacts.
- Follow all other rules for Character Creation/Advancement as laid out in this chapter.

STEP TWO:
CHOOSE METATYPE

RAISE MENTAL, PHYSICAL, AND SPECIAL ATTRIBUTES

METATYPE & SPECIAL ATTRIBUTES

In *Shadowrun, Fifth Edition*, character generation is based on the Priority System. The Priority System is a table with the following columns: Metatype, Attributes, Magic or Resonance, Skills, and Resources. The rows are divided into Priority Levels ranging from Priority A to Priority E. Players assign a specific Priority Level for each of the columns to their character depending on their preferences. The values assigned must be different for each column (representing each aspect of the character), and there can be no duplications. For example, a character may not have Priority Level B for Magic or Resonance and Priority B for Resources. The higher the Priority Level (A, B, etc.), the more valuable it is for the character. Characters use Karma later on to customize their characters even further.

The player begins the character-creation process by choosing their character's metatype, or race. There are five distinct races within *Shadowrun*: dwarfs, elves, humans, orks, and trolls. Each race receives different racial advantages (and possibly disadvantages). Humans, for example, receive a higher rating in Edge (+1). Trolls receive Thermographic Vision, +1 Reach, and Dermal Armor, but they also have the disadvantage of having their Lifestyle costs doubled to reflect the costs of adapting everything they use—especially their gear, including cyberware or bioware—to meet their massive physical requirements. Several metatypes also receive physical or mental advantages/disadvantages to their attribute ratings (such as higher or lower natural attribute limits). When determining which metatype best fits the character concept they wish to play, the player should refer to the **Metatype Attribute Table** (p. 66) and review the specific details for each metatype.

Once the player has selected the metatype they wish to play, they should review the Metatype column to determine which Priority Levels give them the best options for their character based on their preferred metatype and the special attribute points they need. The special attributes are Edge, Magic, and Resonance; if you want your character to have a high rating in one or more of these areas, make sure you select a row with plenty of special attribute points. Technomancer characters need to ensure they can have a high Resonance, while magician or adept characters will want a high Magic rating.

Edge starts at the value for each metatype listed in the **Metatype Attribute Table** (p. 66). Magic and Resonance start at 0.

PRIORITY TABLE

PRIORITY	METATYPE	ATTRIBUTES	MAGIC OR RESONANCE	SKILLS	RESOURCES
A	Human (9) Elf (8) Dwarf (7) Ork (7) Troll (5)	24	**Magician or Mystic Adept:** Magic 6, two Rating 5 Magical skills, 10 spells **Technomancer:** Resonance 6, two Rating 5 Resonance skills, 5 complex forms	46/10	450,000¥
B	Human (7) Elf (6) Dwarf (4) Ork (4) Troll (0)	20	**Magician or Mystic Adept:** Magic 4, two Rating 4 Magical skills, 7 spells **Technomancer:** Resonance 4, two Rating 4 Resonance skills, 2 complex forms **Adept:** Magic 6, one Rating 4 Active skill **Aspected Magician:** Magic 5, one Rating 4 Magical skill group	36/5	275,000¥
C	Human (5) Elf (3) Dwarf (1) Ork (0)	16	**Magician or Mystic Adept:** Magic 3, 5 spells **Technomancer:** Resonance 3, 1 complex form **Adept:** Magic 4, one Rating 2 Active skill **Aspected Magician:** Magic 3, one Rating 2 Magical skill group	28/2	140,000¥
D	Human (3) Elf (0)	14	**Adept:** Magic 2 **Aspected Magician:** Magic 2	22/0	50,000¥
E	Human (1)	12	—	18/0	6,000¥

Edge, of course, is beneficial to all characters. Special attribute points may be spent entirely on Edge if the player chooses not to play a magic user or a technomancer, or they may split these points as they see fit between their Edge and Magic or Resonance attribute ratings if the player so chooses. These Special Attribute Points may only be allocated on Special Attributes. They may never be used to raise Mental or Physical attributes. Any unspent Special Attribute points disappear following the character creation process. If the player chooses an option that provides 0 special attribute points, don't worry. Players may elect to spend the Karma given to them during the character creation process to raise these special attributes by following the standard **Character Advancement** rules (p. 103).

Note that for most metatypes, the maximum rating for Magic, Resonance, and Edge is 6; humans have a maximum Edge rating of 7. Certain qualities (Lucky, Exceptional Attribute) allow characters to exceed attribute maximums by one, but the player must purchase these qualities with Karma and may only do so with gamemaster approval (the player may purchase either Lucky or Exceptional Attribute, but not both). Even if one of these qualities is purchased, the player must still spend the attribute points/Karma to raise the attribute to that new limit. With Exceptional Attribute, you can end up with a maximum Magic or Resonance rating of 7 when starting the game (before initiation or submersion).

MENTAL AND PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES

The next step is to raise the character's attributes. The player chooses a Priority Level from the Attribute column that best suits their vision of the character. The number in this column represents the points a player has available for raising their character's Mental and Physical attributes. When spending attribute points, refer to the Metatype Attribute Table. This table shows the starting attribute ratings for each metatype (the number before the slash) as well as the maximum for each. Characters begin at their metatype's starting levels at no cost; so humans begin with a Body rating of 1, dwarfs have a starting Body rating of 3, orks have an initial rating of 4, and trolls start at 5. Characters then apply their attribute points to these starting values. It takes 1 attribute point to raise an attribute rating by 1.

A character must spend all attribute points during character creation. They may not spend attribute points from the Attributes column to raise special attributes or for any other purpose. Characters at character creation may only have 1 Mental or Physical attribute at their natural maximum limit; the special attributes of Magic, Edge, and Resonance are not included in this limitation.

A player needs to be careful in building their character, as many of the attributes have a natural limit below the default level of 6 to reflect a metatype's inherent disadvantage in that particular attribute.

While the player is raising attributes and deciding on starting levels for her character, she should keep in mind several factors that will be calculated at the end of character creation based upon the character's attributes, namely Initiative and Inherent Limits. Initiative determines the order in which characters, both player characters and non-player characters (NPCs), act in combat (for rules on Initiative, see **Initiative**, p. 52). The base Initiative rating for a character is Intuition + Reaction.

Inherent limits (see **Tests and Limits**, p. 46) restrict the number of hits characters can count in certain tests. They are based on attributes, so when choosing attributes, keep these limits in mind. The formulas for inherent limits are found on the **Final Calculations Table** (p. 101).

Technomancers need to remember that their mental attributes will determine attributes for their Living Perso-

METATYPE ATTRIBUTE TABLE

RACE	BODY	AGI	REA	STR	WIL	LOG	INT	CHA	EDG	ESS	INI
Human	1/6	1/6	1/6	1/6	1/6	1/6	1/6	1/6	2/7	6	REA + INT
Human Racial: None											
Elf	1/6	2/7	1/6	1/6	1/6	1/6	1/6	3/8	1/6	6	REA + INT
Elf Racial: Low-Light Vision											
Dwarf	3/8	1/6	1/5	3/8	2/7	1/6	1/6	1/6	1/6	6	REA + INT
Dwarf Racial: Thermographic Vision, +2 dice for pathogen and toxin resistance, +20% increased Lifestyle cost											
Ork	4/9	1/6	1/6	3/8	1/6	1/5	1/6	1/5	1/6	6	REA + INT
Ork Racial: Low-Light Vision											
Troll	5/10	1/5	1/6	5/10	1/6	1/5	1/5	1/4	1/6	6	REA + INT
Troll Racial: Thermographic Vision, +1 Reach, +1 dermal armor, +100% increased Lifestyle costs											

EXAMPLE

ASSIGNING ATTRIBUTE POINTS

JAMES

James thinks the human metatype is best suited to the role of technomancer, and he has decided to use row D in the Metatype column. As a human character, he receives 3 Special Attribute Points that he wants to spend on Edge and Resonance. James assigns 2 Special Attribute points to Resonance (giving it a rating of 2) and assigns 1 Special Attribute point to Edge. Consulting the Metatype Attribute Table, he sees that the starting Edge rating for a human is 2, so the point he spent raises the rating to 3.

James then moves on to the Attribute column of the Priority Table and decides to assign row C to his Mental and Physical Attributes. That gives him 16 Attribute Points to raise his Mental and Physical attribute ratings. After distributing the points, James' attributes look like this:

ATTRIBUTES	RACIAL BASE/ NATURAL LIMIT	POINTS SPENT	NEW RATINGS
Body	1/6	2	3
Agility	1/6	1	2
Reaction	1/6	1	2
Strength	1/6	2	3
Charisma	1/6	2	3
Intuition	1/6	3	4
Logic	1/6	3	4
Willpower	1/6	2	3
Essence	6	—	6
Total		16	
Special Attributes (so far)			
Edge	2/7	1	3
Resonance	0/6	2	2
Racial Bonuses/Disadvantages: None			

ROB

Rob has decided to build a troll street samurai and has chosen Priority B for his metatype, even though this priority level does not give any Special Attribute Points to a troll character. If he desires to raise his Edge, Rob will need to spend his bonus Karma later on in the character creation process to do so. Rob chooses Priority A for his Attributes category, giving him 24 Attribute Points to spend on his Mental and Physical attributes. After Rob has spent all his points, he reviews his character. He intends to take the Exceptional Attribute quality, which would allow him to take his Strength up to 11, and the gamemaster has given Rob permission to take this quality at character creation. Knowing this ahead of time, Rob has spent the points to give his character Strength 11. Rob checks his character, and makes sure he only has one Physical attribute that is at (or in this case, above) his character's natural attribute maximum limit. Rob's attributes look like this:

ATTRIBUTES	RACIAL BASE/ NATURAL LIMIT	POINTS SPENT	NEW RATINGS
Body	5/10	4	9
Agility	1/5	3	4
Reaction	1/6	2	3
Strength	5/10 (11)	6	11
Charisma	1/4	2	3
Intuition	1/5	2	3
Logic	1/5	2	3
Willpower	1/6	3	4
Essence	6	—	6
Total		24	
Special Attributes (so far)			
Edge	1/6	0	1
Racial Bonuses/Disadvantages: Thermographic Vision, +1 Reach, +1 dermal armor, +50% gear and Lifestyle costs			

KYRA

Kyra has decided her character will be an elf. Scanning the Priority Table, Kyra decides on Priority Level D for metatype. Like Rob's troll character, Kyra's elf character will receive no extra Special Attribute Points. For her to raise her special attributes, she will need to use Karma later on. Kyra settles on Priority B for her Attribute Points. This gives Kyra 20 Attribute Points to improve her character. Checking her character, none of her Mental or Physical attributes are at their natural maximum limit. After spending her points, these are her character's attributes:

ATTRIBUTES	RACIAL BASE/ NATURAL LIMIT	POINTS SPENT	NEW RATINGS
Body	1/6	2	3
Agility	2/7	4	6
Reaction	1/6	2	3
Strength	1/6	1	2
Charisma	3/8	3	6
Intuition	1/6	3	4
Logic	1/6	2	3
Willpower	1/6	3	4
Essence	6	—	6
Total		20	
Special Attributes (so far)			
Edge	1/6	0	1
Racial Bonuses/Disadvantages: Low-Light Vision			

na, their representation in the **Matrix** (p. 249). For details on the living persona, see p. 250. Similarly, when magicians project themselves into astral space, they have **astral attributes** (p. 314) that are based on their mental attributes. The choices players make in this section will affect those attributes later.

STEP THREE: CHOOSE MAGIC OR RESONANCE

The next column of the Priority Table is Magic or Resonance. This is a column for players who want to be magic users (adepts, aspected magicians, mages, shamans, and mystic adepts) or technomancers. Players who desire none of these character options choose Priority E for this column. For a quick reference on the variety of magic users available in *Shadowrun, Fifth Edition*, refer to the **Magic User Types** sidebar. Additionally, the **Life as a Magic User in 2075** and **Life as a Technomancer in 2075** sidebars help players know what they're getting into if they choose these kinds of characters.

Priority Levels A through C in this column specify the character's starting attribute rating (either Magic or Resonance) along with a number of skills and spells or complex forms for their character as listed in the appropriate box. These are already paid for and can be added to the character sheet right away; they do not cost any skill points or Karma up front, although they can be increased later. The player should select which skills, spells, and complex forms they want for their character at this time. A list of active skills (including those that are Magic- and Resonance-based) can be found on p. 90. Skills are described in detail in the Skills chapter, p. 128. Adepts should review the adept powers (p. 308) to ensure that the skills they choose will support the adept powers they want, such as the Blades skill for the Critical Strike (skill) adept power. Spells listings start on p. 283, while complex forms can be found on p. 252.

Aspected magicians must choose a specific Magic-based skill group (Sorcery, Conjuring, or Enchanting) to be the one area of magic that the character practices. Once an aspected magician take this specific skill group, the character may never take any other skills from the other Magic skill groups, either at character creation or at any future point.

Note that while adepts receive Power Points for free (equal to their Magic rating), mystic adepts do not. Mystic

LIFE FOR A MAGIC USER IN 2075

Magic has been back in the world for more than sixty years, but the Awakened—the term for those who channel magic—remain a small minority of the population. As a result, they are both admired and feared. They are the subjects of wild rumors, baseless speculation, and the occasional free-floating prejudice.

Many mundane metahumans fear what the Awakened can do with their abilities. There have been magic-based terror attacks, ranging from the Ghost Dance to the global attacks Winternight launched before and during the second Matrix Crash in 2064, that give credence to these fears. Policlubs like Humanis feed these fears, building them up to spark hate and violence against the Awakened.

As a reflection of this fear and as a measure of caution, many sprawls require magic users to register their gear, spell formulas, and spirits (typically they only care about spirits and gear of at least moderate power—in game terms, those with a rating of 3 or higher). They are required to purchase licenses in order to legitimately carry and use magic. These legal licenses often come with invasive requirements, including being subjected to compliance checks that can be conducted at any time, giving law-enforcement corporations the right to search a magic user's premises without a warrant, even when the person is not present. Some sprawls require magic users to give law enforcement agencies and/or security corporations blood samples that could serve as material links to track the character magically if necessary. Because of this, many magic users in the shadows have fake IDs and licenses, partly so they won't get nabbed by the cops, but also so they don't have to turn any part of their bodies over to them. Rules and cost for magic items and licenses are found in the **Street Gear** section (p. 416).

Since magic is such a rare commodity, it is very much desired by the megacorporations. Legally registered magic users often find themselves the targets of extractions, snatched by rival megacorporations looking to press them into employment.

The Awakened have their own prejudices, often against magic users not of their type (e.g., magicians are sometimes prejudiced against adepts). Since they are limited in what they can do, aspected magicians suffer the most prejudice within the Awakened community. Many see them as not fully Awakened or not full magic users, and they are barred from many magic groups.

MAGIC USER TYPES

Shadowrun has four distinct types of magic users: Adept, Magician, Aspected Magician, and Mystic Adept. Here's a quick breakdown of the unique characteristics of each group. A player should weigh these different characteristics carefully when deciding which kind of magic user to play. Page references are provided for more detailed information about each type of magic user.

ADEPTS

- Adepts channel mana into their own bodies to enhance their natural abilities, making their talents and skills much more potent.
- Adepts never astrally project (p. 313).
- Adepts only perceive astral space by purchasing the Astral Perception power (p. 312).
- Adepts can learn the Assensing skill only if they have the Astral Perception power.
- Adepts cannot use skills from any magic-related skill groups (Sorcery, Conjuring, or Enchanting).
- Adepts can follow mentor spirits (p. 320).
- Adepts gain Adept Powers that are purchased with Power Points. Adepts receive a number of Power Points equal to their Magic rating.

MAGICIANS

- Magicians can astrally perceive.
- Magicians can astrally project.
- Magicians can choose freely from the magical skills or skill groups (Sorcery, Conjuring, Enchanting).
- Magicians can cast spells, conjure spirits, or enchant magical items.
- At character creation, magicians who cast spells, perform rituals, or create alchemical preparations may know a maximum number of formulae from each group equal to their Magic Rating x 2 (i.e., Magic Rating of 4 allows 8 spells, 8 rituals, 8 alchemical preparations).

ASPECTED MAGICIANS

- Aspected magicians are a limited form of magician.
- Aspected magicians do not astrally project.
- Aspected magicians can astrally perceive.
- Aspected magicians must choose one, and only one, of the following three Skills/Skill Groups.
  - Sorcery (Spellcasting and related skills)
  - Conjuring (Summoning and related skills)
  - Enchanting (Alchemy and related skills)
- Aspected magicians cannot perform any of the magical skills associated with the two groups they did not select.
- Aspected magicians can only learn Counterspelling if they take the skills to be a spellcaster.
- Aspected magicians can follow mentor spirits.
- At character creation, aspected magicians who cast spells, perform rituals, or create alchemical preparations may know a maximum number of formulae from each group equal to their Magic Rating x 2 (i.e., Magic Rating of 4 allows 8 spells, 8 rituals, 8 alchemical preparations).

MYSTIC ADEPTS

- Mystic adepts are a combination of magicians and adepts.
- Mystic adepts never astrally project.
- Mystic adepts can astrally perceive if they purchase the Astral Perception adept power.
- Mystic adepts purchase their spells/rituals/preparations in the same way as magicians.
- Mystic adepts must purchase their Power Points with Karma (5 Karma each at character creation for a full Power Point, with a maximum number of points equal to their Magic attribute rating).
- Mystic adepts can have any skills from the Enchanting, Sorcery, or Conjuring skill groups.

LIFE FOR A TECHNOMANCER IN 2075

Much about what technomancers are and how they operate is shrouded in mystery. Though there is no firm estimate of their exact number (since many of them choose to remain underground and not reveal their gift), it is believed that there are fewer technomancers than magic users.

Because so little is known about technomancers, many in the world fear what they might be and what they might be capable of. In pop culture their abilities are exaggerated to extreme proportions (they might be shown, for example, shutting down every piece of electronics for blocks), and some groups have put bounties on their heads. Many corporations would like to study technomancers, conducting experiments to map their talents and discover ways to better understand and perhaps duplicate their abilities. Others groups just want them dead. The legal rights of technomancers are hazy and ambiguous—many times deliberately so. The world in 2075 is generally hostile and occasionally very dangerous for technomancers, Many technomancers pass themselves off as ordinary deckers, carrying dummy cyberdecks to blend in. They will often do whatever it takes to keep their secret from being discovered.

EXAMPLE

MAGIC OR RESONANCE COLUMN

JAMES

James has already assigned Priority Levels D to his Metatype and C to Attributes for his technomancer character, so these Priority Levels are no longer available to him, leaving A, B, and E. Row E has no Resonance options, so James rules that one out and chooses Priority Level B. This gives him a Resonance Attribute Rating of 4 (which is added to the 2 Special Attribute Points he dedicated to Resonance in Step Two), as well as two Resonance-based skills at rating 4. He selects Compiling and Registering as the skills. For his 2 complex forms, he chooses Cleaner and Editor.

At this point during character creation, James' character looks like this:

ATTRIBUTES	RACIAL BASE/ NATURAL LIMIT	POINTS SPENT	NEW RATINGS
Body	1/6	2	3
Agility	1/6	1	2
Reaction	1/6	1	2
Strength	1/6	2	3
Willpower	1/6	2	3
Logic	1/6	3	4
Intuition	1/6	3	4
Charisma	1/6	2	3
Essence	6	—	6
Total		16	
Special Attributes (so far)			
Edge	2/7	1	3
Resonance	0/6	2	6
Racial Bonuses/Disadvantages: None			
Resonance-Based Skills: Compiling 4, Registering 4			
Complex Forms: Cleaner, Editor			

ROB

Rob's street samurai does not use Magic or Resonance. He chooses Priority E, giving him no points in this step, so he simply moves on to the next step in the character creation process.

KYRA

Kyra's character is a mystic adept. Reviewing the Priority Levels that she has left, Kyra chooses Priority A. This gives her a Magic attribute rating of 6, two rating 5 Magical Skills, and 10 spells. She picks up Spellcasting and Counterspelling as her skills, and after looking over the selection of spells starting on p. 283, she chooses 10 that suit her (see the list below).

Kyra won't get any free Power Points for adept powers, so she decides to spend some of her Karma now just to keep things organized. Kyra decides to spend 10 Karma from her Karma fund to purchase 2 Power Points. She divides up those Power Points among the listed **adept powers** (p. 308). She'll choose the skills that some of the powers enhance once she has selected her specific skills.

This is what Kyra's character looks like after including her Magic Rating and the new skills, adept powers, and spells:

ATTRIBUTES	RACIAL BASE/ NATURAL LIMIT	POINTS SPENT	NEW RATINGS
Body	1/6	2	3
Agility	2/7	4	6
Reaction	1/6	2	3
Strength	1/6	1	2
Willpower	1/6	3	4
Logic	1/6	2	3
Intuition	1/6	3	4
Charisma	3/8	3	6
Essence	6	—	6
Total		20	
Special Attributes (so far)			
Edge	1/6	0	1
Magic	—	0	6
Racial Bonuses/Disadvantages: Low-Light Vision			
Magic-Based Skills: Spellcasting 5, Counterspelling 5			
Adept Powers		**Cost**	
Enhanced Accuracy (Skill)		.25	
Improved ability (skill)		.5	
Improved Potential (social)		.5	
Mystic Armor (1 Level)		.5	
Voice Control (1 level)		.25	
Spells: Analyze Truth, Blast, Clairaudience, Clout, Heal, Improved Invisibility, Influence, Lightning Bolt, Mind Probe, Stunball			

adepts must purchase Power Points using Karma at the cost 5 Karma per full Power Point. The maximum number of Power Points Mystic Adepts may have is equal to their Magic rating. These points would be purchased during **Step Seven: Spending Your Left Over Karma** (p. 98).

Remember, players are not limited to only what they receive in the priority level. Players may spend Karma to buy more spells or complex forms, register sprites, or bind spirits toward the end of character creation

STEP FOUR: PURCHASE QUALITIES

This next step in the character creation process is finalizing the list of qualities the character will have at the beginning of a *Shadowrun* campaign.

Qualities help round out your character's personality while also providing a range of benefits or penalties. There are two types of Qualities—Positive Qualities, which provide gameplay bonuses and require an expenditure of Karma; and Negative Qualities, which impose gameplay penalties but also give bonus Karma the player can spend in other areas.

As mentioned earlier, the character starts the character creation process with 25 Karma, and some of that can be spent to buy Qualities. Players can spend all of it, some of it, or none of it based on what they want their character to have and how much Karma they want to save for later. Additionally, at creation characters can only possess at most 25 Karma worth of Positive Qualities and 25 Karma worth of Negative Qualities.

After character creation, Positive Qualities can be purchased during game play, while Negative Qualities may be awarded to the character by the gamemaster based on events that take place in game. Negative Qualities can be bought off using Karma during game play. See **Character Advancement** rules (p. 103) for more about purchasing Positive Qualities or buying off Negative ones.

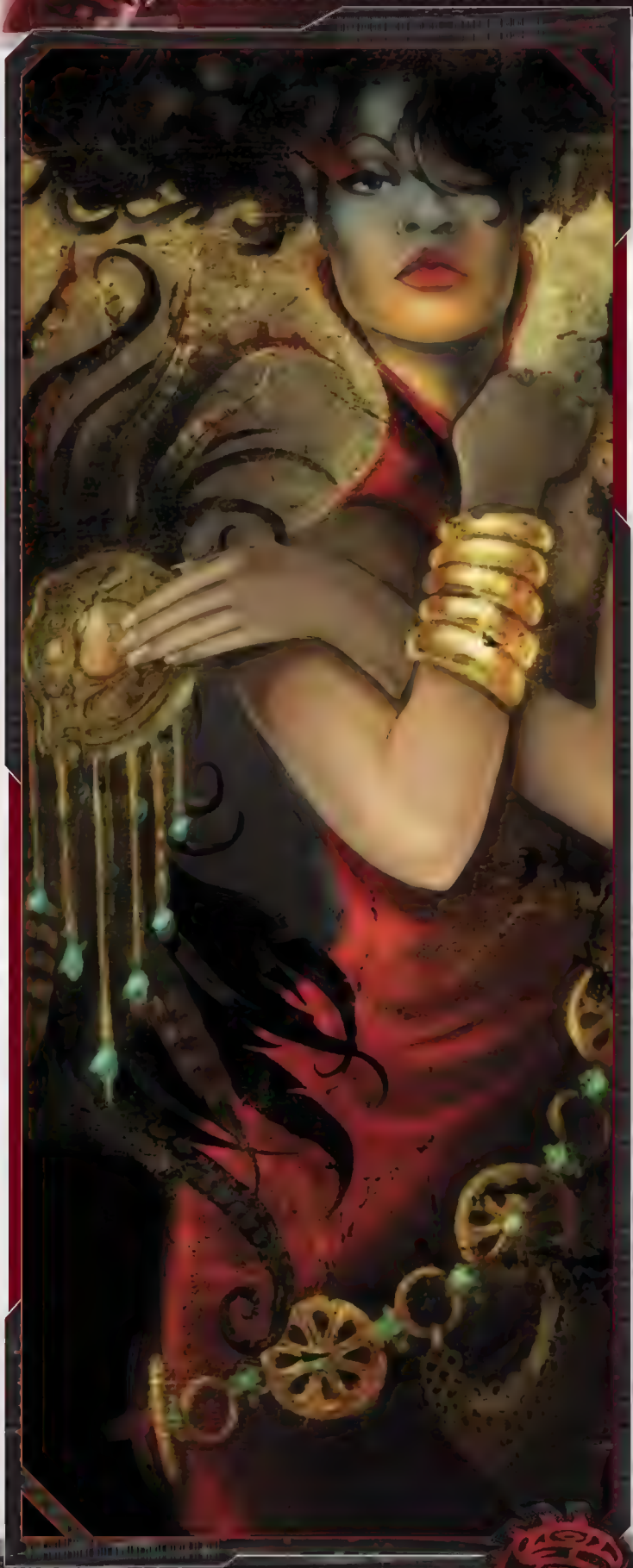
When purchasing a Positive or Negative quality, note the quality on the character sheet along with any bonuses or negative modifiers to skills in parentheses next to the appropriate skills or attributes.

POSITIVE QUALITIES

AMBIDEXTROUS

COST: 4 KARMA

The Ambidextrous character can handle objects equally well with either hand. Without this quality, any action performed solely with the off-hand (i.e., firing a gun) suffers a -2 dice pool modifier (see **Attacker Using Off-Hand Weapon**, p. 178).



ANALYTICAL MIND

COST: 5 KARMA

Analytical Mind describes the uncanny ability to logically analyze information, deduce solutions to problems, or separate vital information from distractions and noise. It's useful in cracking cyphers, solving puzzles, figuring out traps, and sifting through data. This quality gives the character a +2 dice pool modifier to any Logic Tests involving pattern recognition, evidence analysis, clue hunting, or solving puzzles. This quality also reduces the time it takes the character to solve a problem by half.

APTITUDE

COST: 14 KARMA

This quality is how you become even better than the best in the world. The standard limit for skills is 12. Every so often, there is a character who can exceed limitations and be truly exceptional in a particular skill. With this particular quality, the character can have one skill rated at 7 at character creation, and may eventually build that skill up to rating 13. Characters may only take the Aptitude quality once.

ASTRAL CHAMELEON

COST: 10 KARMA

With the Astral Chameleon quality, the character's astral signature blends into the background of astral space and is difficult to detect. All signatures left by the character last only half as long as other astral signatures. Any individuals assensing astral signatures left behind by a character with this quality receive a -2 dice pool modifier for the Assensing Test. Only characters with a Magic rating and capable of leaving astral signatures may have this quality.

BILINGUAL

COST: 5 KARMA

A character with this quality reads, writes, and speaks a second language fluently. They can list a second language as a native tongue (see **Language Skills**, p. 150). This quality can only be acquired at character creation; selecting it gives the character a second free language skill during **Step Five: Purchase Active, Knowledge, and Language Skills,** (p. 88).

BLANDNESS

COST: 8 KARMA

This character blends into a crowd; he's seldom noticed and easily forgotten. He is unremarkable in every aspect of physical appearance. Anyone attempting to describe the character cannot come up with anything more precise than "average height, average build, average hair, etc."

Increase the threshold for anyone to recall specific details about the character by 1. This means a Memory Test with a difficulty of Average (threshold of 2) becomes a Hard test (threshold of 3).

Individuals attempting to shadow or physically locate a character with the Blandness quality in a populated setting receive a -2 dice pool modifier on all tests related to their search. The same penalty applies if they're asking around about the person based on the individual's physical appearance. The modifier does not, however, apply to magical or Matrix searches. If the character acquires any visible tattoos, scars, obvious cyberware, or other distinguishing features, the bonuses from the Blandness quality go away until the distinctive features are removed from the character's appearance.

In certain circumstances and specific situations, the gamemaster may determine that Blandness does not apply. For example, a troll with the Blandness quality still towers head and shoulders over a crowd of humans and so still stands out, no matter how average their horns may be. The character only regains his bonus by leaving the situation where he stands out.

CATLIKE

COST: 7 KARMA

A character with the Catlike quality is gifted with an uncanny elegance, a stealthy gait, and an almost preternatural ability to move without making a sound. They also claim they land on their feet when dropped, though they tend not to let people test this. This quality adds a +2 dice pool modifier to Sneaking skill tests.

CODESLINGER

COST: 10 KARMA

Ones and zeroes are practically a native language to a Codeslinger. The character is adept at performing a particular Matrix action (which she selects when she selects this quality) and receives a +2 dice pool modifier to that Matrix action. This can only be selected for Matrix Actions (p. 237) that have a test associated with them.

DOUBLE-JOINTED

COST: 6 KARMA

A Double-Jointed character has unusually flexible joints and can bend and contort his body into extreme positions. The character receives a +2 dice pool modifier for Escape Artist tests. The character may also be able to squeeze into small, cramped spaces where less limber characters cannot. They're also great at parties and bars.

EXCEPTIONAL ATTRIBUTE

COST: 14 KARMA

The Exceptional Attribute quality is how you get to be the charismatic troll, or the agile dwarf. It allows you to possess one attribute at a level one point above the

POSITIVE QUALITIES

QUALITY	KARMA	PAGE	QUALITY	KARMA	PAGE	QUALITY	KARMA	PAGE
Ambidextrous	4	71	First Impression	11	74	Mentor Spirit	5	76
Analytical Mind	5	72	Focused Concentration	4 ea. (max 6)	74	Natural Athlete	7	76
Aptitude	14	72	Gearhead	11	74	Natural Hardening	10	76
Astral Chameleon	11	72	Guts	13	74	Natural Immunity	4 or 10	76
Bilingual	5	72	High Pain Tolerance	7 ea. (max 3)	74	Photographic Memory	6	76
Blandness	8	72	Home Ground	10	74	Quick Healer	3	77
Catlike	7	72	Human-Looking	6	75	Resistance to Pathogens/Toxins	4 or 8	77
Codeslinger	10	72	Indomitable	3 ea. (max 3)	75	Spirit Affinity	7	77
Double-Jointed	6	72	Juryrigger	10	75	Toughness	9	77
Exceptional Attribute	14	72	Lucky	12	76	Will to Live	3 ea. (max 3)	77
			Magical Resistance	6 ea. (max 4)	76			

NEGATIVE QUALITIES

QUALITY	KARMA	PAGE	QUALITY	KARMA	PAGE	QUALITY	KARMA	PAGE
Addiction	4 to 25	77	Distinctive Style	5	80	Scorched	10	83
Allergy	5 to 25	78	Elf Poser	6	81	Sensitive System	12	83
Astral Beacon	10	78	Gremlins	4 ea. (max 4)	81	Simsense Vertigo	5	83
Bad Luck	12	78	Incompetent	5	81	SINner (Layered)	5 to 25	84
Bad Rep	7	79	Insomnia	10 or 15	81	Social Stress	8	85
Code of Honor	15	79	Loss of Confidence	10	82	Spirit Bane	7	85
Codeblock	10	80	Low Pain Tolerance	9	82	Uncouth	14	85
Combat Paralysis	12	80	Ork Poser	6	82	Uneducated	8	87
Dependent(s)	3, 6, 9	80	Prejudiced	3 to 10	82	Unsteady Hands	7	87
						Weak Immune System	10	87

metatype maximum limit. For example, an ork character with the Exceptional Attribute quality for Strength could take his Strength attribute up to 10 before augmentations are applied, instead of the normal limit of 9. Exceptional Attribute also applies toward Special Attributes such as Magic and Resonance. Edge cannot affected by the Exceptional Attribute (Edge is raised by another quality called Lucky). A character may only take Exceptional Attribute once, and only with the gamemaster's approval.

FIRST IMPRESSION

COST: 11 KARMA

The First Impression quality enables a character to slide easily into new environments, situations, groups, and jobs. Whether infiltrating a gang, making contacts in a new city, or wrangling an invite to a private meet, the character gains a temporary +2 dice pool modifier for relevant Social Tests such as Negotiation and Con during the first meeting. This modifier does not apply to second and subsequent encounters

FOCUSED CONCENTRATION

COST: 4 KARMA PER RATING (MAX 6)

A technomancer or magic user with the Focused Concentration quality has the discipline to manipulate mana or Resonance more precisely than otherwise possible. This precision reduces stress to the magic user's or technomancer's body. She is able to sustain one spell/complex form with a force/level equal to her Focused Concentration rating without suffering any penalties. For example, a magic user with Focused Concentration rating 3 may sustain a Force 3 Armor spell without taking the negative dice pool modifier for sustaining a spell. Sustaining any additional spells or complex forms incurs the standard -2 dice pool modifier per spell or complex form sustained. This quality may only be taken by magic user characters that are able to cast spells and technomancers.

GEARHEAD

COST: 11 KARMA

The Gearhead is who you look for when it's time to stomp on the gas and move. She's a natural-born driver or pilot. When she's at the wheel/stick/controls of a vehicle or drone, she has an intuitive understanding of its limitations and its capabilities and is able to coax whatever machine she's controlling to perform at its best. During vehicle or chase combat, a Gearhead can increase the Speed of her vehicle or drone by 20 percent *or* increase the Handling modifier by +1 (player's choice). She also receives a +2 dice pool modifier when attempting difficult maneuvers or stunts in the vehicle. This bonus lasts for 1D6 minutes.

The player can choose to make this bonus last up to an additional 1D6 minutes if she wants. Doing so pushes the vehicle or drone well beyond its design limits and risks catastrophic damage. For each minute the character pushes the vehicle past its initial bonus period, the vehicle automatically takes one point of stress damage (unresisted)

GUTS

COST: 10 KARMA

When a bug spirit with dripping mandibles comes calling, the character with Guts is the one most likely to stand and fight instead of freaking the hell out. Guts gives a character a +2 dice pool modifier on tests to resist fear and intimidation, including magically induced fear from spells or critter powers.

HIGH PAIN TOLERANCE

COST: 7 KARMA PER RATING (MAX RATING 3)

High Pain Tolerance lets a character keep delivering the pain even if she's had plenty piled on her own head. A character with High Pain Tolerance can ignore one box of damage per rating point of this quality when calculating wound modifiers (see **Wound Modifiers**, p. 169). So a character with this quality at Rating 2 can take 4 boxes of damage but carry on without wound modifiers as if she only had 2 boxes of damage. The -1 wound modifier would then kick in when the character takes her fifth box in damage. This quality may not be used with the Pain Resistance adept power, pain editor bioware, or damage compensator bioware.

HOME GROUND

COST: 10 KARMA

If a character knows her neighborhood better than anyone—the shortcuts, the hiding places, and the people she can trust—then she probably has the Home Ground quality. She knows the families who live there, their stories, and what the kids who moved out are doing; she knows the streets better than GridGuide, knows things that aren't on GridGuide, and knows when GridGuide is wrong. She knows the politics of the gangs, who's running for whom and who's running from whom. But it's not just the physical streets. Depending on the character, her Home Ground quality can manifest in ways specific to who and what she is. When choosing this quality, select one of the bonuses below:

- **Astral Acclimation:** The character has become acclimated to the background count of her Home Ground. Through a lifetime of familiarity she's learned to work around it, enabling her to ignore up to two points of background count.

For example, if the background count on her Home Ground is 3, she sees only a reduction of 1 to her Magic tests; if the background count is 5, for her it is only a 3, and so on. This quality works only on her Home Ground and has no benefit anywhere else.

- **You Know a Guy:** The character has built up long-lasting relationships with people from her neighborhood. These people are not contacts, but they know her as one of their own and are more likely to do favors for or talk to her. NPCs from the character's Home Ground neighborhood are considered friendly toward her wherever she encounters them (unless she has done something to change that).The character receives +2 Street Cred for any Negotiation with people from her Home Ground.
- **Digital Turf:** This is for a decker or technomancer who has a specific host that she calls her own. She may actually own the spot, or it can be a place she frequents enough to consider home. The character receives a +2 bonus to Matrix Tests while in her Home Ground host. Bonuses from other Qualities may stack with Home Ground. If the character has not frequented this host for more than six months, she loses the Home Ground quality because she is no longer as familiar as she should be.
- **The Transporter:** This character knows the layout of streets, back alleys, service tunnels, etc., like the back of her hand. She knows when GridGuide is wrong and when GridGuide is out of date. When the transporter is on her Home Ground, she has a +2 dice pool modifier for Evasion Tests.
- **On the Lam:** Hiding out and lying low are part of a shadowrunner's daily life. On the Lam means a character has an encyclopedic knowledge of safehouses, bolt holes, abandoned buildings, just about any out-of-the-way place not claimed by gangs or squatters. When she needs to find a safe location in a hurry, this character receives a +2 dice pool bonus to her Intuition + appropriate street knowledge skill to find a suitable place to hole up fast.
- **Street Politics:** This character knows the street gangs, the criminal operations, and the beneath-the-surface affiliations that are the social and political fabric of her Home Ground. She receives a +2 dice pool modifier for Knowledge Tests relating to gangs or their operations.

This quality can be taken multiple times, selecting one of the categories above each time.

HUMAN-LOOKING

COST: 6 KARMA

A metahuman character with the Human-Looking quality can pass for human in most circumstances. Human NPCs respond with neutral attitudes toward such characters when making Social skill tests (p. 82), even those humans who are particularly biased against metahumans. The character may suffer increased animosity from metahuman NPCs who are prejudiced against humans and who either mistake him for human or distrust his motives for trying to look human. Only elves, dwarfs, and orks can take the Human-Looking quality.

INDOMITABLE

COST: 8 KARMA PER LEVEL (MAX 3)

Bodies and minds have limits, but some people have the will to push right through those boundaries. For each level of Indomitable, a character receives a +1 increase to an Inherent limit of his choice (Mental, Physical, or Social). He can take up to three levels and can apply them in any way he chooses (+3 to one Inherent Limit, for example; or +2 to one Inherent and +1 to another; or +1 to all three).

JURYRIGGER

COST: 10 KARMA

Juryrigger gives a character an intuitive grasp of the inner workings and underlying principles of mechanical and electronic devices. She knows how to repair the broken, rejuvenate the worn, improve a device's efficiency, or coax it into doing things it's designers hadn't intended. Characters with the Juryrigger quality receive a +2 dice pool modifier for Mechanical Tests when juryrigging gear. If the gamemaster decides what the character wants to accomplish is in fact possible, he determines the threshold for her success using the **Build/Repair Table** (p. 146) as a guideline, then reduces the threshold for the test by 1. While a successful Mechanics Skill Test enables the Juryrigger to perform amazing technical feats, everything she devises is temporary. Examples of what a character may be able to do with Juryrigger include:

- Juryrig a destroyed device so that it will operate just one more time (for 1D6 minutes).
- Tweak an electronic device to function at a rating one higher than normal for 1D6 Combat Turns.
- Temporarily coax extra performance from a vehicle's or drone's components, increasing its Sensor or Handling by +1 (if combined with bonuses from Gearhead, the vehicle's or drone's critical components completely burn out at the

end of the duration from being pushed well beyond their limits; at that point, the vehicle or drone becomes a big paperweight).

- Improvise a one-shot device or weapon from disparate components (the gamemaster has final say on whether suitable parts are available).
- Devise an impromptu means to bypass a security measure, such as a trip beam or pressure plate.

LUCKY

COST: 12 KARMA

The dice roll and the coin flips this character's way more often than not, giving her the chance to drop jaws in amazement at her good fortune. Lucky allows a character to possess an Edge attribute one point higher than his metatype maximum (for example, a human character could raise her Edge to 8). Note that taking this quality does not actually increase the character's current Edge rating, it just allows her the opportunity to do so; the Karma cost for gaining the extra point must still be paid. This quality may only be taken once and must be approved by the gamemaster. The Lucky quality cannot be combined with Exceptional Attribute.

MAGIC RESISTANCE

COST: 6 KARMA PER RATING (MAX RATING 4)

This is the wonderful ability to potentially make a Fireball bounce away. For every 6 Karma spent on Magic Resistance, a character receives 1 additional die for Spell Resistance Tests. The Magical Resistance quality, however, is always "on"—the character cannot lower it to receive beneficial spells such as Heal. A character with Magic Resistance cannot take part in spells that require a voluntary subject; such spells automatically fail when used on magic-resistant characters.

Characters with a Magic rating cannot take this quality.

MENTOR SPIRIT

COST: 5 KARMA

Everyone needs some help in life, even if it comes from someone relatively filmy and insubstantial. Mentor Spirit means the character follows a patron spirit (see **Mentor Spirits**, p. 320) that guides him in his practice of magic and provides certain advantages and disadvantages to his natural abilities. A character may change mentor spirits, but he may have only one mentor spirit at a time. To change mentor spirits, the character must first buy off the current mentor spirit as if it were a Negative quality. He can then purchase the quality again to follow a different mentor spirit. This cost represents the toll of divorcing from one mentor spirit and bonding with a new one.

Each tradition has a different name for a mentor spirit. Hermetic mages prefer the term "mentor spirit," while shamans use the word "totem" for the spirit that they follow. While the names may vary, the way the mentor works is consistent.

This quality is only available to characters that possess a Magic attribute rating.

NATURAL ATHLETE

COST: 7 KARMA

A character with this quality has an innate combination of physical fitness, spatial awareness, and natural athletic or gymnastic talent. While the character may not be a world-class athlete and may require training to achieve peak performance, he is in prime physical shape for his size and weight class. The Natural Athlete adds a +2 dice pool modifier for Running and Gymnastics skill tests.

NATURAL HARDENING

COST: 10 KARMA

This quality makes the character's neural structure resistant to feedback. This gives her 1 point of natural biofeedback filtering, which is cumulative with a Biofeedback Filter program or a technomancer's **firewall** (p. 251).

NATURAL IMMUNITY

COST: 4 OR 10 KARMA

The ability to casually sip poison can never be overrated. A character with Natural Immunity has an innate or developed immunity to one single disease or toxin.

This quality is available at two levels. If purchased at the 4 Karma level, the character is immune to a single natural disease or toxin. If Natural Immunity is purchased at the full 10 Karma level, the character is immune to a single, synthetic (artificially created) disease or toxin. Natural Immunity does not affect diseases or toxins that are magically based, such as HMHVV.

The player and gamemaster must agree on the disease, drug, or poison to which the character is immune. The character can take one dose of the drug or poison and experience one exposure to the disease every six hours with no ill effects. Any subsequent dosing or exposure during the next six hours causes normal damage, but the character's recovery time is halved.

Note that characters with Natural Immunity to a disease can be a carrier, infecting other characters while suffering no ill effects.

PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORY

COST: 6 KARMA

A character with Photographic Memory can instantly recall facts, dates, numbers, or anything else he has seen or heard. The character gains a +2 dice pool modifier to all Memory Tests.

QUICK HEALER

COST: 3 KARMA

A character with the Quick Healer quality receives a +2 dice pool modifier to all Healing Tests made on/for/by her, including magical healing.

RESISTANCE TO PATHOGENS/TOXINS

COST: 4 OR 8 KARMA

A character with Resistance to Pathogens/Toxins can fight off diseases and drugs more easily than other characters and receives a +1 dice pool modifier to Resistance Tests. This quality comes at two levels: at 4 Karma the character is resistant to either pathogens or toxins, not both. If the character purchases this quality at 8 Karma, she receives the +1 modifier for resisting both.

SPIRIT AFFINITY

COST: 7 KARMA

Available only to magic users, the Spirit Affinity quality allows a character to be attuned to one type of spirit (see **Spirits**, p. 303). These spirits find the character interesting, are drawn to her, and are more inclined to assist her. They may be reluctant to attack the character, and if forced to do so they are likely to use nonlethal power. Watchers and minions do not count for this quality as they are constructed and are not summoned like normal spirits. Spirit Affinity provides magicians with 1 additional spirit service for each spirit of that type, and it also provides a +1 dice pool modifier for Binding Tests.

Magic users may possess this quality for a type of spirit that is not part of their magical tradition.

TOUGHNESS

COST: 9 KARMA

Characters with the Toughness quality shrug off damage more easily than others. Such characters gain a +1 dice pool modifier to their Body when making Damage Resistance tests.

WILL TO LIVE

COST: 3 KARMA PER RATING (MAX RATING 3)

For each rating point in Will to Live, the character gains 1 additional **Damage Overflow Box** (p. 101). These additional boxes only allow the character to sustain additional damage before dying; they do not raise the threshold at which the character becomes unconscious or incapacitated, nor do they affect modifiers from the damage the character has taken.

NEGATIVE QUALITIES

ADDICTION

BONUS: 4 TO 25 KARMA

A character with the Addiction quality is hooked on chemical substances, such as street drugs (novacoke, bliss, tempo); technological or magical devices, such as better-than-life (BTL) chips or foci; or potentially addictive activities such as gambling or sex. Physiological Addictions affect the Body's functions, producing pain, nausea, shakes, and other side effects that can impair the runner, particularly during withdrawal. Some possible effects of psychological Addictions include paranoia, anxiety, insomnia, poor concentration, mood disorders, and depression. For specific rules on Addiction Tests, Withdrawal Tests, and staying clean, see p. 414.

COMMON ADDICTIONS

- Better-than-life chips (p. 460)
- Alchemical preparations (p. 316)
- Alcohol
- Street drugs
- Foci (see p. 318)
- Augmentations

The bonus Karma value of this quality depends on how severe the addiction is. Levels of addiction include: Mild, Moderate, Severe, or Burnout. Addictions get worse over prolonged periods of time without treatment. Each level of Addiction has a starting dosage level that tells the character how much of a substance or activity they must use for a craving to be sated. This level can be increased if the character has augmentations. The more severe a character's Addiction, the more substance or time devoted to the activity he needs to satisfy his cravings.

At the lower end of the spectrum for the Addiction quality (Mild, Moderate), it is easier to hide the effects of an Addiction. At the most severe levels (Severe, Burnout), there are noticeable physical and mental signs of Addiction. These signs negatively impact his Social Tests even if he is not suffering the effects of withdrawal.

Mild (4 Karma)/1 dose or 1 hour of habit-related activity: Mild cravings occur once a month for the character. If a character fails his Withdrawal Test, he suffers symptoms of withdrawal and must actively seek out and use the substance or engage in the activity to find relief. On a run, this could mean delaying plans that the runner team may have meticulously put together for a job, especially if the character is busy gambling with a bookie or slotting a BTL instead of being available for the run. While the character is suffering withdrawal symptoms, apply a -2 dice pool modifier to all of the character's Mental-attribute-based tests (if psychological dependency) or to all the character's Physical-attribute-based

tests (if physiological dependency). If the character succeeds on his Withdrawal Test, the character does not suffer withdrawal symptoms and does not need the substance or participate in that habit until the character makes their next Withdrawal Test (in one month). He is able to stay clean for that month.

Moderate (9 Karma)/1 dose or 1 hour of habit-related activity: A craving at the Moderate level occurs roughly every two weeks. If the character experiences withdrawal, he suffers a -4 to all Mental-attribute-based tests (if psychological dependency) or -4 to all Physical-attribute-based tests (if physiological dependency) until the craving is satisfied.

Severe (20 Karma)/2 doses or 2 hours of habit-related activity: The addiction is spiraling out of control. The addict experiences cravings once a week. If he fails a Withdrawal Test, he suffers a -4 dice pool modifier to either their Mental- or Physical-based tests (as appropriate for their dependency) while in withdrawal.

In addition, he suffers a -2 dice pool modifier to all Social Tests, whether he is in withdrawal or not. It is all but impossible now for the character to hide his addiction, even when he's had his fix. The physical and psychological symptoms of the damage caused by his Addiction are readily apparent to the close observer.

Burnout (25 Karma) 3 doses/3 hours (minimum) of habit-related activity: Burnout is the final progression of the Addiction quality. The addict experiences cravings for their drug or habit of choice every day. Until they satisfy their craving with a fix, the character suffers a -6 penalty to either his Mental- or Physical-based tests (whichever one is appropriate for their dependency) while in withdrawal.

Because his Addiction is now obvious to even the most casual observer, the character suffers a -3 dice pool modifier for all Social Tests, whether he is in withdrawal or not.

The gamemaster has discretion as to whether or not she should call for Withdrawal Tests during an Addicted character's downtime, depending on to what degree the gamemaster wants the addiction to impact gameplay for the character.

ALLERGY

BONUS: 5 TO 25 KARMA

A character with the Allergy quality is allergic to a substance or condition found in their environment. The value of this quality depends on two factors. The first is whether the substance or condition is Uncommon (2 Karma) or Common (7 Karma). Next, determine the severity of the symptoms: Mild (3 Karma), Moderate (8 Karma), Severe (13 Karma), or Extreme (18 Karma). Add the appropriate point values together to find the final value. For example, the value of an Uncommon Moderate Allergy (Silver) is 10 Karma (2+8 Karma). If a character is attacked with a substance to which they are allergic, they lose 1 die from their Resistance Test for each stage of severity of the Allergy (e.g., 1 die for a Mild allergy, 2 dice for a Moderate allergy, etc.).

ASTRAL BEACON

BONUS: 10 KARMA

The astral signature of a character with the Astral Beacon quality is like, well, a beacon—highly visible on the

ALLERGY TABLE

CONDITION	VALUE	DESCRIPTION
Uncommon	2	The substance or condition is rare for the local environment. Examples: silver, gold, antibiotics, grass.
Common	7	The substance or condition is prevalent in the local environment. Examples: sunlight, seafood, bees, pollen, pollutants, Wi-Fi sensitivity, soy, wheat.
Mild	3	Symptoms are discomfiting and distracting. Apply a –2 dice pool modifier to the character's Physical Tests while under the effects of the Allergy.
Moderate	8	Contact with the allergen produces intense pain. Apply a –4 dice pool modifier to all Physical Tests made while a character experiences the symptoms.
Severe	13	Contact with the allergen results in extreme pain and actual physical damage. Apply a –4 dice pool modifier to all tests made while a character experiences symptoms. The character also suffers 1 box of Physical Damage (unresisted) for every 1 minute they are exposed to the allergen.
Extreme	18	A character at this level, when exposed to the allergen, goes into full anaphylactic shock. The character receives a –6 dice pool modifier for anything they do. The character is considered to be in excruciating agony. The character suffers 1 box of Physical Damage (unresisted) for every 30 seconds they are exposed to the allergen. First Aid, Medicine, or magical means can stop the damage taken from the anaphylactic shock.

astral plane. The signature also lasts twice as long as it would without the Astral Beacon quality and others assensing it receive a -1 to the threshold of their Assensing Test for gathering information about it. Only characters with a Magic rating may take this quality.

BAD LUCK

BONUS: 12 KARMA

This character is cursed—his own luck often turns against him. When the character uses Edge, roll 1D6. On a result of 1, the point of Edge is spent, but it has the exact opposite effect intended. For example, if a character hopes to gain additional dice he loses that many dice from his dice pool. If a character spends Edge to go first in an Initiative Pass, he ends up going last. If a character spent Edge to negate a glitch, Bad Luck turns it into a critical glitch. The character suffers Bad Luck on only one Edge roll per game session. After the character has suffered his Bad Luck, he does not need to roll the test for Bad Luck for any more expenditures of Edge for the duration of that game session.

BAD REP

BONUS: 7 KARMA

A character with a Bad Rep quality has a dark and lasting stain on her reputation. She may be a former Knight Errant cop known to have been particularly brutal in dealing with shadowrunners. Or word on the street might be that she once killed a member of her own runner team. If she's Awakened and comes from a polluted region, it may be generally accepted that she's a toxic shaman. Whether she is actually guilty of any wrongdoing is not relevant. What people believe she has done has permanently tainted the way they see her and how they deal with her. Whatever the reason, the character starts play with 3 points of **Notoriety** (p. 372) that can only be removed or decreased by confronting and resolving the source of the bad reputation. Only then may the Bad Rep quality be bought off with Karma.

CODE OF HONOR

BONUS: 15 KARMA

The character has a binding Code of Honor when it comes to killing members of a specific group; it's a matter of unwavering principle. The character with the Code of Honor quality chooses a specific group that they will not kill or allow others to kill. Examples of this group could include women, children, innocent bystanders, or a specific metatype. A character can choose to protect specific paracritters, but only if the specified paracritter possesses the Sapience power.

The gamemaster must approve the group that the character designates as being "off limits." If the group (such as children) is not regularly encountered in campaigns, the gamemaster can reject the choice. If the player feels strongly about his choice, the gamemaster may allow the player to take two groups they will not harm, (i.e., women and children), one of which must be likely to be encountered in the campaign. A magician can legitimately choose to not destroy any type of spirit from which their Mentor Spirit bestows a bonus for summoning. This Code of Honor respects their Mentor Spirit and is worthy of the Karma. Characters can't pick an obscure or non-existent group to acquire this quality—you can't acquire Karma by vowing to never kill sapient hamsters, for example.

Any time anyone attempts to kill a member of the character's protected list, the character must make a Charisma + Willpower (4) Test. A failed roll means the character must immediately put a stop the violence against the member of their protected group. If the situation forces the character to take action against any of his protected group, he will always choose non-lethal methods. Killing a member of the group he has sworn to protect is a line he will not cross for any reason.

There are drawbacks to having a Code of Honor. For example, it can leave witnesses behind. For each person in the protected group the character leaves alive and who is in a position to remember them, increase the character's Public Awareness by 1. The character's job options are also limited—he will not take a job if the objective is the death of a member of his protected group and will have reservations about taking part in a mission with a high probability of causing collateral harm to members of his protected group.

There is always a chance things will go wrong whenever non-lethal force is used. A person may have a life-threatening allergic reaction to a usually harmless knockout drug, or a heart condition that makes a taser shock deadly. For this reason, each time the character takes a violent action or allows others to take violent action against a member of his chosen group, the gamemaster makes a secret roll of 1D6. On a roll of 1, there is an unforeseen complication from the use of non-lethal force. With a metahuman it could be a life-threatening medical condition; with a spirit, an attempt to banish rather than destroy may in fact set the spirit free. When a complication arises, the gamemaster makes a secret Perception (4) Test for the character to notice if anything has gone wrong.

If a person in the character's chosen group is killed, whether intentionally or inadvertently, the character loses a point of Karma for that adventure for each person in their "protected group" that is killed.

The Code of Honor can take other forms as well. For example:

- **Assassin's Creed:** A character never kills anyone that they are not paid to kill. Being precise as an assassin, not leaving collateral damage, and be-

ing invisible are important hallmarks of those who believe in the Assassin's Creed. Characters who take this version of Code of Honor lose 1 point of Karma for every unintentional and/or unpaid murder they commit, and their Public Awareness goes up by 1 for each such death.

- **Warrior's Code:** The character who follows a Warrior's Code maintains a strict sense of personal honor. In 2075, this likely means a character will not kill an unarmed person, take lethal action against an opponent who is unaware or unprepared for an attack (i.e., a guard who doesn't know the runner is there), or knowingly take an action that could kill someone who is defenseless (i.e., from a stray bullet or allow someone to be killed from a sniper shot). The character loses 1 Karma per unarmed or defenseless person that they kill or allow to be killed through their actions.

CODEBLOCK

BONUS: 10 KARMA

A character with the Codeblock quality always has trouble with a particular Matrix action. He receives a -2 dice pool modifier any time he attempts that type of Matrix action. Codeblock only applies to Matrix actions with an associated test; it does not apply to actions that do not require a test (p. 237). Characters cannot apply Codeblock toward hacking actions they are never likely to take.

COMBAT PARALYSIS

BONUS: 12 KARMA

A character with Combat Paralysis freezes in combat. On the character's first Initiative Test, the character divides their Initiative Score for that round in half (rounded up). In subsequent Combat Turns, the character may roll their normal Initiative. Combat Paralysis also gives the character a -3 dice pool modifier on Surprise Tests. If the character must make a Composure Test while under fire or in a similar combat situation, the gamemaster applies a +1 threshold modifier.

DEPENDENTS

BONUS: 3, 6, OR 9 KARMA

A character with the Dependents quality has one or more loved ones who depend on them for emotional support and financial aid. Dependents may include children, parents, a spouse or lover, a sibling, or an old friend. Meeting the needs of a dependent should take up a fair amount of the character's time, as well as some of the character's money. Increase the amount of time it takes to learn a new skill or improve an existing skill by fifty percent. See the **Character Advancement** section on p. 103 for more information on how long it takes to improve skills. Also increase the base time for any long-term projects by fifty percent. A dependent could also be a hindrance in other ways—getting underfoot, sharing living space, involving herself in the character's work, borrowing the car, calling at the most inopportune moments, etc.

For 3 Karma, the dependent is an occasional nuisance: dropping in unexpectedly (such as when the character must go to a meet), needing emotional support, favors, or other confirmations of friendship/commitment, and occasionally money. Examples of dependents at this level include: slacker sibling, long-term boyfriend/girlfriend, or a child not living with the character but for whom the character pays child support and visits regularly. Raise the character's lifestyle cost by 10 percent each month.

For 6 Karma, the dependent is a regular inconvenience: needing attention and commitment on a regular basis, getting involved in the character's affairs, sharing living space. Examples of dependents at this level include: a live-in lover/wife/husband or family member, a child for whom the character shares custody and routinely has in his home (every other weekend, etc.), or a young child or close sibling for whom the character is responsible. Increase the character's lifestyle cost by 20 percent each month.

At the 9 Karma level, the dependent is close family or a life partner and lives with the character. The dependent is a strain on the character's time and resources, and/or requires special care and attention that limits the character's availability for missions or specific actions. Examples of these dependents include large family sharing the living space, parents or grandparents with medical or physical needs, and full custody of any children. Increase the lifestyle cost for the character by 30 percent each month.

DISTINCTIVE STYLE

BONUS: 5 KARMA

A character with the Distinctive Style quality has at least one aspect of his appearance, mannerism, or personality that makes him inconveniently memorable. Choices for Distinctive Style include, but are by no means limited to: tattoos that cannot be easily concealed, an accent or atypical manner of speaking, bizarre fashion choices, scars, gang or prison signs, flashy custom augmentations, or non-metahuman modifications like a tail. Note that what's distinctive in one culture or location may not be in another.

Whatever Distinctive Style the player selects makes her character easy to remember. Anyone who attempts to identify, trace, or physically locate this character (or gain information about him via legwork) receives a +2 dice pool modifier for relevant tests. If an NPC makes a **Memory Test** (p. 152) to determine how much they recall about the character, reduce the Difficulty Threshold by 1, to a minimum of 1.

This quality is physical in nature and does not apply to astral searches. This quality may only be taken once. This quality is incompatible with Blandness.

ELF POSER

BONUS: 6 KARMA

The Elf Poser is a human character who wants to be an elf. She associates with elves as much as possible, talks like elves, and alters her appearance to resemble an elf. Characters with this quality may undergo cosmetic surgery to get elf ears and elf eyes, and they may successfully pass as elves and avoid any negative Social modifiers associated with being a non-elf.

Real elves consider Elf Posers an embarrassment, many humans think of them as sellouts, and other metatypes generally consider posers to be pathetic. If an elf discovers the character's secret, the elf is likely to treat her with contempt and hostility (see **Social Modifiers Table**, p. 140). An outed elf poser may also face stigma from prejudiced humans as a "race traitor."

Only human characters may take the Elf Poser quality.

GREMLINS

BONUS: 4 KARMA PER LEVEL (MAX 4)

Characters with the Gremlins quality don't get along with technology. Devices malfunction inexplicably, software crashes unexpectedly, vehicles refuse to start, components become unusually fragile at his touch, and wireless links suffer faltering connections and odd interference whenever he's involved.

For each level (maximum of 4), reduce the number of rolled 1s necessary to get a **glitch** (p. 45) by 1 whenever the character is attempting to use a moderately sophisticated device. For example, a character with a dice pool of 8 and Gremlins level 2 (8 Karma) would trigger a glitch if two or more 1s result from the test (instead of the normal 4). The gamemaster may also require the character to make a test for operation that would otherwise succeed automatically to see whether or not a glitch occurs.

When describing the effects of a Gremlin-induced glitch, gamemasters should play up the notion of a particularly weird mechanical or electronics malfunction. Some examples of Gremlin-induced glitches include: the magazine falling out of a pistol when attempting a critical shot, a keypad inexplicably burning out while entering a code to disarm an alarm system, or the commlink interface converting to Sperethiel mid-sentence when attempting to access a restricted node.

Note that Gremlins is a Negative quality—its effects hinder the character (and probably entertain others). The character cannot use his Gremlins quality to damage an opponent's high-tech equipment merely by touching it. Anything the character attempts to sabotage using only Gremlins will function flawlessly. (Obviously, he can try any ordinary means of sabotage, but Gremlins will haunt his efforts.)

The effect only applies to external equipment and does not affect cyberware, bioware, or other implants.

INCOMPETENT

BONUS: 5 KARMA

An Incompetent character possesses a total lack of knowledge or ability with a certain Active skill group—or, perhaps worse, they have some vague knowledge or the skills contained in the group, but they have neither the coordination nor the comprehension to come anywhere close to carrying it off properly. No matter how much effort they put into this area, they simply cannot grasp it—it would take a miracle for them to somehow, someday advance to the level of "poor" in those skills.

Incompetent may not be applied to Language or Knowledge skills. The Incompetent character is treated as having skill level of "unaware" for all skills in the skill group (see the **Skill Rating Table**, p. 131).

In some cases, a Success Test may be required for tasks most people take for granted. Characters may not possess that skill group for which they have the Incompetent quality. If gear grants a bonus or requires the use of a specific skill in which the character is Incompetent, the character gains no benefits from the gear.

Gamemasters are free to reject any choices that would prove irrelevant or exploitative in actual play, such as Incompetent: Outdoors in a campaign based entirely inside an arcology. (This should go without saying, but just in case: Characters may never choose Incompetent for any skill group that they are physically incapable of using. A non-magician cannot take Incompetent in Sorcery, Conjuring, or Enchanting; a non-technomancer cannot be Incompetent in a skill that requires Resonance; and so on.)

Incompetent may be purchased only once.

INSOMNIA

BONUS: 10 OR 15 KARMA

A character with the Insomnia quality has trouble falling asleep and seldom feels well rested. Usually, this is only an annoyance. For runners, however, this can become a major problem when they are dependent on being able to rest at every opportunity to remain sharp. Insomnia can lengthen the amount of time it takes for a character to recover Stun damage.

At the 10 Karma level, before a character rolls his Body + Willpower to recover Stun damage, the character rolls an Intuition + Willpower (4) Test. If the character succeeds on this test, the character is not impeded

by Insomnia and the character regains Stun damage as normal. He also regains 1 point of Edge after 8 hours of restful sleep. If the character fails, double the amount of time it normally would take for a character to recover their Stun damage. So instead of healing a number of boxes of Stun damage in an hour, it now takes two hours per roll. If the character is affected by Insomnia, the character does not have his Edge refreshed and may not have it refreshed for up to another 24 hours.

At the 15 Karma level, a failed Willpower + Intuition (4) Test means that all efforts to regain Stun damage through rest are negated during that time period, and the character must try again later. No Stun damage is regained from the attempt due to the insomnia the character experiences, and the character must wait for 24 hours before their Edge refreshes.

LOSS OF CONFIDENCE

BONUS: 10 KARMA

The Loss of Confidence quality means something has caused the character to lose confidence in himself and one of his abilities. Though a skilled decker, he failed to hack into a Stuffer Shack host, or despite high Agility, he glitched an easy Climbing Test and fell into a dumpster—whatever the reason, he now doubts himself and his abilities. In tests involving the affected skill, the character suffers a -2 dice pool modifier. If the character has a specialization with the skill, the character cannot use that specialization while suffering a loss of confidence. The skill chosen for the character to have a Loss of Confidence must be one that the character prides himself in and has invested in building. Only skills with a rating 4 or higher may suffer the Loss of Confidence quality. Edge may not be used for tests involving this skill when the character is suffering Loss of Confidence.

LOW PAIN TOLERANCE

BONUS: 9 KARMA

Characters with Low Pain Tolerance are particularly sensitive to pain; they incur a -1 wound modifier for every 2 boxes of cumulative damage, instead of the normal 3 boxes. This affects both Physical and Stun damage tracks.

ORK POSER

BONUS: 6 KARMA

Influenced by Goblin Rock or over-hyped orxploitation trends, an Ork Poser is an elf or human character who alters her appearance to appear as an ork. Various cosmetic biomods—tusk implants, steroids, larynx alterations, etc.—allow him to successfully pass as an ork. Ork posers are an embarrassment to many orks, but some tolerate, if not appreciate, the compliment behind the effort. This means an ork who discovers the character's secret may either become very hostile toward him or be willing to let the character join the "family"—provided he passes an appropriate hazing ritual to prove his "orkness." An outed ork poser may also face stigma from other humans or elves as "race traitors," if those humans/elves harbor any prejudice against orks.

Only humans and elves may take the Ork Poser quality.

PREJUDICED

BONUS: 3 TO 10 KARMA

With this quality the character is Prejudiced against members of a specific group of people: metahumans, Awakened, non-metahuman sapient critters, or some other group. The character is not merely intolerant—he is outspoken about his beliefs and may actively work against the target of his prejudice. Depending upon the degree of prejudice, this quality can get the character into trouble for expressing his views or when forced to confront the targets of his prejudice.

The Karma bonus granted by this quality varies depending upon how common the hated group is, how often the character is likely to encounter members of the group, and the degree to which the character is openly antagonistic toward them. Refer to the **Prejudiced Table** to determine the Karma value of the quality based on the prevalence of the hated group and the degree of prejudice.

When dealing with the target of their prejudice, a character receives a -2 dice pool modifier per level of severity of the Prejudiced quality for all Social Tests. If negotiations are a part of the encounter, the target receives a +2 modifier per level of the Prejudiced quality. So if a character who is radical in their prejudiced views against the Awakened tries to negotiate with the target of their prejudice, they receive a -6 to their Negotiation Test while the target receives a +6 dice pool modifier.

PREJUDICED TABLES

PREVALENCE OF TARGET GROUP	KARMA VALUE
Common target group (e.g, humans, metahumans)	5 Karma
Specific target group (e.g., the Awakened, technomancers, shapeshifters, aspected magicians)	3 Karma

DEGREE	KARMA VALUE
Biased (e.g., closet meta-hater)	0 Karma
Outspoken (e.g., typical member of Humanis)	2 Karma
Radical (e.g., racial supremacist)	5 Karma

SCORCHED

BONUS: 10 KARMA

A Scorched character is coping with neurological problems brought on by damage caused in some way by Black IC, Psychotropic IC, or BTL. The problem can manifest as short- or long-term memory loss, unexpected blackouts, frequent migraines, diminished senses (sight, touch, smell, etc.), and mood disorders such as paranoia and anxiety. The player chooses one specific effect of Scorched, and its effect should be pronounced enough to hinder the character and present potential plot hooks for the gamemaster. Whenever he enters VR or slots a BTL chip, the character must make a Body + Willpower (4) Test. On a failed roll, he experiences the specified physical effects for six hours. A glitch or critical glitch on this test results in suffering the effects for 24 hours. The only way to eliminate the Scorched quality is to get the medical treatment necessary to repair the damage, then spend the Karma to buy off the Negative quality. Once Scorched, though, the character remains susceptible to the condition. Another bad encounter with Black or Psychotropic IC or a BTL will bring this quality back. In addition to the physical side effects the character may experience from being Scorched, the character is vulnerable to damage inflicted by either Black or Psychotropic IC or BTLs. When faced with this IC, the character must make a Willpower (3) Test to be able to confront it without panicking. If he is able to confront the IC that caused their Scorched condition, the character suffers a -2 to Damage Resistance Tests when these programs are inflicting damage.

To take the Scorched quality for BTLs, the character must have at least a Mild Addiction to BTLs and possess the gear necessary to use BTLs.

To take the Scorched quality for Black and/or Psychotropic IC, the character must be either a decker or a technomancer.

SCORCHED PHYSICAL SIDE EFFECTS TABLE

EFFECT	GAME RULES
Memory Loss (short term)	The character does not remember slotting a BTL chip. The character makes another Withdrawal Test immediately. A failed test means the craving comes back immediately, as do the symptoms of withdrawal. Character must slot another chip. For encountering IC, a character must make a Memory Test with a threshold increased by +1. A failed Memory Test results in gaps in memory and possible disorientation while in host.
Memory Loss (long term)	The same effects of Memory Loss (short term) apply. In addition, for the duration of the effect, the character loses access to one active skill. He simply does not remember how to use it (for example, the Pistols skill). Treat as unaware in that skill until symptoms abate.
Blackout	For the duration of the effect, the character retains no memories of events during that time frame. Memory cannot be restored by technological or magical means.
Migraines	The character receives –2 to all Physical and Mental tests, sensitivity to light, and nausea (p. 409).
Paranoia/Anxiety	Character must make Social Tests for even basic interactions. These are Success Tests with a threshold of 5. If no apparent skill applies, the character must default to Charisma –1. Failure means the character reacts with paranoia or anxiety in that situation for the duration of the effect.

SENSITIVE SYSTEM

BONUS: 12 KARMA

A character with the Sensitive System quality has immuno-suppressive problems with cybernetic implants. Double all Essence losses caused by cyberware. Bioware implants, regardless of how they are grown or designed, are rejected by the character's body.

This quality works differently for characters who are technomancers or Awakened and therefore never plan to take implants. Awakened individuals or technomancers remain fully capable of channeling mana or using Resonance, but they are potentially more susceptible to Drain or Fading. A magic user or technomancer with a Sensitive System must make a Willpower (2) Test before any Drain or Fading Tests. Failure on this test results in Drain or Fading Values being increased by +2 for that particular Drain or Fading Test, as the energy traveling through their body does more damage to their Sensitive System.

SIMSENSE VERTIGO

BONUS: 5 KARMA

Characters who suffer from Simsense Vertigo experience feelings of disorientation whenever they work with augmented reality, virtual reality, or simsense (including smartlinks, simrigs, and image links). Such characters receive a -2 dice pool modifier to all tests when interacting with AR, VR, or simsense.

SINNER (LAYERED)

BONUS: 5 TO 25 KARMA

There are four types of SINs that fall under the SINner (Layered) quality: National SIN, Criminal SIN (either Corporate or National), Corporate Limited SIN, or Corporate Born. Individuals with SINs are required by law to always broadcast their SINs. A legal SIN is required for all legal purchases. This makes them very useful things to have, so those who are SINless generally get by with the use of **fake SINs** (p. 367) just so they can participate in society.

NATIONAL SIN

At the 5 Karma level, the character has what is called a National SIN. The character's parents were legal citizens of a nation (such as the UCAS or CAS) and he has been a citizen of that nation from birth. He has the right to vote, qualify for passports issued by his nation, enlist in the national military, or work in the national government. A National SIN is required for any national security clearance or any form of national military career. A character with a National SIN pays fifteen percent of their gross income in taxes. He is also in no way connected to any of the megacorporations. The main drawback to having a legal National SIN is the character is in the system. The nation in the player character's background has the character's biometric data (DNA, fingerprints, retinal scans) on file, and that biometric data is shared with law enforcement agencies through the Global SIN Registry. This makes it much easier to track a character should a job go sideways. Also, nations typically sell the personal information tied to the character's SIN to corporations. Those with a legal SIN get nearly three times as much spam as those who don't have a SIN or rely on fake SINs, and the spam messages they receive are disturbingly tailored to their preferences (based on their buying and browsing habits).

CRIMINAL SIN

At the 10 Karma level, the character has a Criminal SIN (either Corporate or National); his Criminal SIN replaces any previous SIN. At some point in his life, the character was arrested and served time for a felony-level offense and was branded a criminal for the rest of his life. He is legally required to broadcast his Criminal SIN at all times; failure to do so is a felony and can lead to re-incarceration. He is shunned by law-abiding society. Law-abiding citizens will, if they must, deal with a SINless character before they'd have any interaction with a known criminal. With his Criminal SIN, the character will experience prejudiced views, suspicion, and/or open hostility from most people with SINs. He will often be denied entry to certain locations (high-end stores, car dealerships, museums, galleries, etc.) and will have difficulty finding legal employment. He can expect to be brought in and held up to 48 hours for questioning anytime a crime is committed in his area. The judicial system in 2075 is more an assembly line than institution of justice. Suspects are treated as guilty unless proven innocent, plausible circumstantial evidence is often sufficient for conviction, and sentencing has more to do with the judge's mood than the crime. In this environment it's likely the cops will be more interested in closing the case than solving any crime; they may try to pin crimes on the character with the Criminal SIN whether or not she had anything to do with it. Some degree of "adjusting" facts and "interpreting" witness accounts to support allegations is common; fabricating evidence, if only to meet conviction productivity goals, is not rare. Magic users tend to receive much harsher treatment from the judicial system than mundane criminals. If the character is a magic user with a Criminal SIN, he is registered with local law enforcement. He can expect regular—but usually not scheduled—checks to confirm he lives and to ensure he is not using forbidden spell formula, foci, or other magical gear. The nation or corporation that issued the Criminal SIN will keep close tabs on the character, if he fails to update residential information or appears in any way to be trying to evade their oversight, he is subject to arrest. He is also required to pay a fifteen percent tax on his gross income to the entity that issued his Criminal SIN.

CORPORATE LIMITED SIN

At the 15 Karma level the character has the Corporate Limited SIN; he has somehow gained a position in a megacorporation from the outside. He may have been hired as a wageslave (or been the minor child of a person hired as a wageslave), or perhaps brought in by someone in the megacorp who saw advantage in his skill, talent, area of expertise, or some other useful attribute. Under most circumstances the Corporate Limited SIN replaces any National SIN. His Corporate Limited SIN becomes part of the Global SIN Registry, to which law enforcement agencies and security corporations alike have access. Many of these Corporate Limited SINs record whether or not the character is Awakened. The Corporate Limited SIN allows the character to be employed by the megacorp under most circumstances, and it replaces any National SIN that the character may have had previously. With the Corporate SIN, the character can be gainfully employed by the issuing megacorporation as a wageslave, a low-ranking member of the corporation's security services, or an enlisted member of the corporation's military. Though he could have a secret-level security clearance to perform his duties, he cannot rise to a leadership position, become an officer, or be part of the megacorporation's Special Forces (such as the Red Samurai). As a group, characters that possess Corporate Limited SINs are believed to either know something valuable about the inner workings of the megacorporation or have a skill set rival megacorps would want; as such they are considered valid targets for extraction, even if they are no longer active with the corporation. Characters with the Corporate Limited SIN experience prejudice and hostility from those in the shadows who are SINless. The SINless believe the corporations deliberately keep them poor and powerless so

they can be exploited. The character with the Corporate Limited SIN may find himself being personally blamed for his corporation's actions—protesting he has no real authority and no connection with the actions in question usually does little good. To the SINless and neo-anarchists the character with the Corporate Limited SIN has sold out and chosen a corrupt and oppressive system over his own people. The character pays twenty percent of his gross income in taxes to his megacorporation.

CORPORATE SIN

At the 25 Karma level is the Corporate Born SIN. The character with this ID was probably born into a mega corporation, or belonged to one when it achieved extraterritoriality. At least one of his parents probably had the Corporate Born SIN as well. He grew up in the corporation, his social involvement, education, and almost every aspect of his life was managed by the corporation. His skills and aptitudes were evaluated constantly, and he was groomed for the career path to which he was best suited; his whole world was the corporation. Characters with the Corporate Born SIN had the potential and the opportunity to advance through the corporation hierarchy. He could have been a department administrator, a finance strategist, an agent of corporate intelligence, an officer in a megacorp's military, or even a member of Corporate Special Forces (Renraku's Red Samurai or Ares' Firewatch). With a Corporate Born SIN, he could have enjoyed top-secret clearance within the corporation and access to nearly unlimited resources. Then something happened. An unforgivably costly mistake, the machinations of a rival, a supervisor in need of a scapegoat—something pushed the character out of the corporation and into the cold and unforgiving shadows. In the shadows a SIN that had been the key to opportunity is now a deadly liability. Most in the shadows see the Corporate Born as the privileged few, the aristocrats in the armored limousines who look down on them, oppress them, exploit them and deny them their basic rights. If the SINless discover the character's Corporate Born SIN, reactions will range from deep suspicion to violent hostility; serious injury and death are real possibilities. The character's loyalty to his corporation is never questioned, which can be an insurmountable liability in a culture that works against the megacorps. Would-be runners have been killed for holding Corporate Born SINs. Fortunately, Corporate Born records are limited to the megacorporation that generated them. Files in the Global SIN Registry can confirm she has a valid SIN, but do not contain any additional information. Those with Corporate Born SINs pay a tax of ten percent of their gross income to their corporation.

SOCIAL STRESS

BONUS: 8 KARMA

Whether as a result of loss or trauma or due to innate psychological makeup, the Social Stress quality burdens the character with emotions that interfere with his ability to interact with others. A specific cause and trigger for the Social Stress must be established. For example, if his Social Stress is caused by survivor's guilt after the loss of a close friend, unexpectedly encountering someone who looks similar to the lost friend will heighten stress. When a character is using Leadership or Etiquette skills, reduce the number of 1s required to glitch the test by 1. Gamemasters should call for more Social Tests for characters with Social Stress to determine how a character reacts to others, particularly if a situation related to the cause of their stress arises.

SPIRIT BANE

BONUS: 7 KARMA

A character with a Spirit Bane really torques off a certain type of **spirit** (p. 303). Whether the character has a reputation for harming this sort of spirit or something about her aura enrages them, spirits of the type affected by the Spirit Bane are likely to harass the character when she is in their presence, and they may be reluctant to obey or perform favors for the character or her friends. If spirits of this type are ordered to attack a party that includes the character, these spirits will single her out and attempt to destroy her first. Affected spirits will always use lethal force against these characters with the Spirit Bane quality. If the character with Spirit Bane tries to summon or bind this spirit, she suffers a -2 dice pool modifier for the attempt. If the summoner tries to banish a spirit of this type, the spirit receives a +2 dice pool modifier for resisting her attempt. Watchers and minions do not count for Spirit Bane, as they are constructs that are not summoned like normal spirits.

This quality may only be taken by magic users. Magic users may possess this quality for a type of spirit that is not a part of their magical tradition.

UNCOUTH

BONUS: 14 KARMA

The character with the Uncouth quality has difficulty interacting with others. He acts impulsively, overreacts to any perceived provocation, and tends to do whatever pops into his head without considering the consequences (i.e., flipping off Mr. Johnson, calling a drunk troll a "Trog," or responding to casual trash talk from a rival runner by punching her in the face). All Social Tests made by the character to resist acting improperly or impulsively receive a -2 dice pool modifier.

Additionally, the cost for learning or improving Social Skills is double for Uncouth characters (including at character creation), and they may never learn any Social skill groups. Uncouth characters are treated as "unaware" in any Social skills that they do not possess at Rating 1 or higher (see **Skill Ratings**, p. 129). The gamemaster may require the character to make Success Tests for social situations that pose no difficulty for normal characters.

EXAMPLE

CHOOSING QUALITIES

JAMES

In his planning during Step One, James had already decided he wanted the Natural Hardening quality, which costs 10 Karma. Looking over the rest of the qualities, James also decides to pick up Analytical Mind (5 Karma) and Resistance to Toxins (Tear Gas, 4 Karma) for his technomancer character. That's a total of 19 Karma worth of qualities, leaving 6 from his original 25. James decides to pick up Negative Qualities to add to this Karma amount so he can have some left to improve his character at the end of the character creation process. James decides to pick Addiction (Moderate, BTLs) for 9 bonus Karma, Dependents (live-in girlfriend) for 6 Karma, and Prejudiced (Corporate Wageslaves, Common, Biased) for 5 bonus Karma. The Negative Qualities give him 20 Karma back, meaning his current Karma total is 26.

His Qualities break down as follows:

Starting Karma: 25

POSITIVE QUALITY	KARMA COST	NEGATIVE QUALITY	KARMA BONUS
Analytical Mind	–5	Addiction (Moderate BTLs)	+9
Natural Hardening	–10	Dependents (live-in girlfriend)	+6
Resistance to Toxins	–4	Prejudiced (Corporate Wageslaves)	+5
Remaining Original Karma	6	**Total Bonus Karma**	20

Current Total Karma: 26

ROB

Rob has already picked out the Exceptional Attribute (Strength) quality for 14 Karma and SINner (National) for a bonus of 5 Karma. The two of them combine for a reduction of 9 Karma. Rob wanted the SINner quality because his idea for the troll character is that he was a former soldier from the United Canadian American States. Rob then chooses the Quick Healer quality (3 Karma) and one level of Will to Live (3 Karma), for reduction of 6 more Karma. Rob has spent 15 Karma, which means he has 10 Karma left. He chooses Bad Rep (7 bonus Karma) and two levels of the Gremlins quality (8 bonus Karma) to give him back 15 Karma, meaning he now has 25, calculated as follows:

Starting Karma: 25

POSITIVE QUALITY	KARMA COST	NEGATIVE QUALITY	KARMA BONUS
Exceptional Attribute (Strength)	–14	SINner (National)	+5
Quick Healer	–3	Bad Rep	+7
Will to Live (1 level)	–3	Gremlins (2 levels)	+8
Remaining Original Karma	5	**Total Bonus Karma**	20

Current Total Karma: 25

KYRA

At this point in character creation, Kyra has already designated her Karma pool for qualities and Power Points. In Step One, she targeted Mentor Spirit (5 Karma) and Focused Concentration (Rating 2, 4 Karma each for a total of 8 Karma). In step 2, she decided to spend 10 Karma purchasing 2 Power Points for adept powers. She has spent 23 Karma so far (5 + 8 + 10 = 23), leaving her with only 2 Karma. If Kyra wants more Karma at the end to improve her character, she must take some Negative Qualities. She chooses the following: Code of Honor (does not kill other elves, 15 bonus Karma), Distinctive Style (Gang Tattoos, 5 bonus Karma), and Mild Addiction (Bliss, 4 bonus Karma). For her mentor spirit, Kyra decides to have her character follow a spirit called Sea. Kyra also chooses the +2 bonus for summoning water spirits, which she notes on her character sheet. Kyra's qualities and her remaining Karma are calculated as follows:

Starting Karma: 25

POSITIVE QUALITY	KARMA COST	NEGATIVE QUALITY	KARMA BONUS
Focused Concentration (2 levels, 4 Karma each)	–8	Code of Honor (Elves)	+15
Mentor Spirit (Sea)	–5	Distinctive Style (Gang Tattoos)	+5
Adept Power Points (2)	–10	Addiction (Mild, Bliss)	+4
Remaining Original Karma	2	**Total Bonus Karma**	24

Current Total Karma: 26

UNEDUCATED

BONUS: 8 KARMA

An Uneducated character is not mentally impaired—she just never had the opportunity to learn. Whether because she and her family were isolated squatters, or were SINless, or otherwise underprivileged, she was denied access to the education system. She has only a rudimentary knowledge of reading, writing, and arithmetic.

Characters with the Uneducated quality are considered "unaware" in Technical, Academic Knowledge, and Professional Knowledge skills they do not possess (see **Skill Ratings**, p. 129), and they may not default on skill tests for those skills. The gamemaster may also require the character to make Success Tests for ordinary tasks that the typical sprawl-dweller takes for granted. Additionally, the Karma cost for learning new skills or improving existing ones in these categories is twice the normal rating (including at character creation), and it's possible the character will never learn some skill groups belonging to these categories.

UNSTEADY HANDS

BONUS: 7 KARMA

A character with Unsteady Hands has mild shakes that affect the dexterity and finesse in his hands. The character suffers a –2 dice pool modifier for all Agility-based tests when symptoms manifest themselves. The condition could be physiological (an untreated genetic disorder or damaged nerves, for example), caused by psychological trauma, or even be symptomatic of age. Certain augmentations or medications can mask these symptoms under normal circumstances. Under more stressful situations in the course of the run, there is a chance the Unsteady Hands condition can reappear. The character makes an Agility + Body (4) Test following a stressful encounter (combat, for example). A successful test means the character does not experience the symptoms of this condition (this time). A failed test causes the difficulties associated with unsteady hands to re-emerge, and they remain with the character for the remainder of the run.

WEAK IMMUNE SYSTEM

BONUS: 10 KARMA

A character with a Weak Immune System has reduced resistance to infections and disease. Increase the Power of any disease by +2 for every Resistance Test. A character with Weak Immune System cannot take the Natural Immunity or Resistance to Pathogens/Toxins qualities. A Weak Immune System often results from immune-suppression treatments used in cybersurgery and bio-genetic procedures, so it is reasonable to believe that characters that have undergone extensive body modifications are more likely to acquire this quality.

STEP FIVE: PURCHASE SKILLS

You now have the basic attributes of your character; the next step is to figure out your skills, the areas where you have particular abilities and gifts. This is covered in the fourth column of the Priority Table. Remember that at this point, players should have only two Priority Levels left that have yet to be assigned, so they should choose one of them for this column.

Skills are broken down into three types: Active, Knowledge, and Language skills. Active skills are what the character can do physically: use firearms, drive a car, tell convincing lies, cast spells, register sprites, etc. Knowledge skills are what the character knows: how to find runner hangouts, the layout of the city, short cuts, the locations of street clinics, how to identify street gangs, etc. Language skills are the languages the character can speak, write, and comprehend.

WHAT THE NUMBERS MEAN

The first number in the skills column is the number of skill points a character has to spend on individual skills. These skill points are generally used to purchase Active skills, though they can be used for Knowledge and Language skills too (see below). If you don't get exactly the skill ratings you want in this step, remember that skills may also be raised with Karma at the end of character creation. In this step, it only takes one skill priority point to either acquire a new skill or raise a skill rating by 1.

The number in the second column shows how many points characters can use on skill groups. Skill groups contain similar or complimentary skills that a player purchases as a bundle. When a skill group is purchased, the character is considered to have all the individual skills of the skill group at the rating of the group. the character wishes to break up the skill group during game play and raise only one of the skills, he is free to do so, but may not raise those skills as a skill group again until all skills possess the same rating. Skill group points may not be used to purchase individual skills and vice versa. In addition, skill groups cannot be broken up in this step, so individual skill points cannot raise the ratings of skills purchased as a group. (Note that skill groups can be broken up in **Step Seven: Spend Your Left Over Karma** (p. 98).

In character generation, the highest characters can raise a skill is 6 (7 if they purchase the Aptitude quality). After character generation, the highest rating a skill can hit is 12 (13 with the Aptitude quality).

All skill and skill group points must be spent at the time of character creation. These points cannot be saved or used after the game starts**.** The player should make sure any individual skills they want to purchase are not duplicated in any skill group they have taken. For example, a player may wish to purchase the Running skill, but if they have already purchased the Athletic skill group, the group includes running—they do not need to purchase the running skill a second time.

Along with skill ranks, players may also want to use their points to purchase **specializations**. Specializations are parts of a skill in which a character has invested extra time and effort, so they have become extra skilled. For

COMMON KNOWLEDGE SKILLS IN 2075

- Black Market Pipelines
- Smugglers
- Runner Hangouts
- Mr. Johnsons
- Corporate Security
- Fixers
- Riggers
- Organized Crime
- [City] Knowledge
- Street Gang Identification
- Corporate Politics
- National Politics
- Magical Theory
- Magic Threats
- Chemistry
- Magic Groups
- Dragons
- Parazoology
- Vices
- Wilderness Survival

COMMON LANGUAGES IN 2075

- Sperethiel (elven language)
- Or'zet (ork language)
- English
- Japanese
- Mandarin
- Russian
- French
- Italian
- German
- Aztlaner Spanish
- Spanish
- Lakota
- Dakota
- Diné (Navajo)

KNOWLEDGE CATEGORY EXAMPLES

CATEGORY	LINKED ATTRIBUTE	EXAMPLES
Academic	Logic	Biology, Medicine, Magic Theory, Politics, Philosophy, Literature, History, Music, Parabotany, Parazoology
Interests	Intuition	Current Simsense movies, popular trideo shows, 20th Century trivia, Elven Wine, Urban Brawl, Combat Biking, Pop music
Professional	Logic	Journalism, Business, Law, Military Service
Street	Intuition	Gang Identification, Criminal Organizations, Smuggling Routes, Fences

example, if you have the Blades skill, you may specialize in an axe or survival knife. Having a specialization gives you a +2 dice pool bonus to skill tests involving the area of specialization.

At character creation, a specialization costs 1 skill point. No individual skill may have more than one specialization. As a character develops, though, they may gain other areas of expertise (for example, you may complement your axe knowledge with sword expertise) and so add more specializations to the same skills. Along with being purchased in this step, specializations may be purchased using Karma at the end of character creation (see **Character Advancement**, p. 103).

Specializations cannot be purchased for skill groups. Skill groups reflect a general understanding of similar skills rather than a particular expertise that a specialization denotes. Players may choose to buy a specialization for an individual skill within a skill group, but if they do so the skill group is broken from that point forward, meaning that all skills of the group must be raised separately. Additionally, once a specialization is taken for a skill in the skill group, it is impossible to reconstruct that skill group. This cannot happen in Step Five of character creation—you can only break up a skill group by buying a specialization for it in **Step Seven** (see p. 98 for details).

Survival on the streets depends on two things (at least): being really good at what you do, and having some backup skills for when things go to hell. If you're going to be a shooter, stock up on the appropriate gun skills, but maybe add some Perception so you can see your targets coming, some Sneaking to keep them from seeing you, and some First Aid in case you wind up catching a bullet. If you're a magician, you need plenty of Spellcasting, Counterspelling, and maybe Summoning, but Gymnastics might be a nice addition to help you avoid incoming attacks, and Palming may be useful for slipping a keycard from a guard while you're invisible. And if you're a face, you need plenty of social skills, but you'll be asking for trouble if you don't buy some combat skills to fall back on for those times when words fail you. Whatever your character concept, you should think of your character's skills as a whole, building some excellent skills while also providing an overall balance to maximize your chances of success. You won't have all your skills where you want them at first, but that's why you play the game—as you finish missions and earn more Karma, you'll have the chance to boost both your skills and your attributes.

For ease of reference, a master list of skill groups and skills are provided in this section. Full descriptions of skills and their specializations are found in the **Skills** chapter (p. 128).

RESTRICTED SKILLS

There are some skills that cannot be used by all characters. Magic and Resonance-based skills are restricted to characters who have a Magic or Resonance attribute rating. Without the appropriate attribute, the character cannot learn or utilize these skills. These restricted skills are listed under the Magic and Resonance headings in the list of Individual Skills on p. 151.

Additionally, aspected magicians can use only one category of Magic skills (Sorcery, Conjuring, or Enchanting), while magicians and mystic adepts are able to use the whole range of skills. Deckers, even though many of their talents are similar to technomancers while in the Matrix, cannot use Resonance-based skills (namely Compiling, Decompiling, and Registering). For specifics on skill restrictions and whether a character can take a specific skill, refer to the **Skills** chapter (p. 128).

KNOWLEDGE AND LANGUAGE SKILLS

Characters receive free Knowledge and Language skills points equal to (Intuition rating + Logic rating) x 2. These points are spent in the same way as other skill points, meaning that spending 1 point gives 1 rank in a skill.

In addition to the free points, your character receives one language that he knows as a native language at no cost. On a character sheet, this is designated with an "N"

SKILL GROUPS & INDIVIDUAL SKILLS

SKILL GROUPS

ACTING	ATHLETICS	BIOTECH	CLOSE COMBAT	CONJURING
Con	Gymnastics	Cybertechnology	Blades	Banishing
Impersonation	Running	First Aid	Clubs	Binding
Performance	Swimming	Medicine	Unarmed	Summoning
CRACKING	**ELECTRONICS**	**ENCHANTING**	**FIREARMS**	**INFLUENCE**
Cybercombat	Computer	Alchemy	Automatics	Etiquette
Electronic Warfare	Hardware	Artificing	Longarms	Leadership
Hacking	Software	Disenchanting	Pistols	Negotiation
ENGINEERING	**OUTDOORS**	**SORCERY**	**STEALTH**	**TASKING**
Aeronautics Mechanic	Navigation	Counterspelling	Disguise	Compiling
Automotive Mechanic	Survival	Ritual Spellcasting	Palming	Decompiling
Industrial Mechanic	Tracking	Spellcasting	Sneaking	Registering
Nautical Mechanic				

INDIVIDUAL SKILLS

AGILITY

Archery, Automatics, Blades, Clubs, Escape Artist, Exotic Melee Weapon (Specific), Exotic Ranged Weapon (Specific), Gunnery, Gymnastics, Heavy Weapons, Locksmith, Longarms, Palming, Pistols, Sneaking, Throwing Weapons, Unarmed Combat

BODY

Diving, Free-Fall

REACTION

Pilot Aerospace, Pilot Aircraft, Pilot Exotic Vehicle (Specific), Pilot Ground Craft, Pilot Walker, Pilot Watercraft

STRENGTH

Running, Swimming

CHARISMA

Animal Handling, Con, Etiquette, Impersonation, Instruction, Intimidation, Leadership, Negotiation, Performance

INTUITION

Artisan, Assensing, Disguise (includes makeup and enhancement), Interests Knowledge, Language, Navigation, Perception, Street Knowledge, Tracking

LOGIC

Academic Knowledge, Aeronautics Mechanic, Arcana, Armorer, Automotive Mechanic, Biotechnology, Chemistry, Computer, Cybertechnology, Cybercombat, Demolitions, Electronic Warfare, First Aid, Forgery, Industrial Mechanic, Hacking, Hardware, Medicine, Nautical Mechanic, Professional Knowledge, Software

WILLPOWER

Astral Combat, Survival

MAGIC

Alchemy, Artificing, Banishing, Binding, Counterspelling, Disenchanting, Ritual Spellcasting, Spellcasting, Summoning

RESONANCE

Compiling, Decompiling, Registering

as the skill rating. If your character has taken the Bilingual quality, you may have a second native language, which you also receive for free.

Additional Language skills are purchased and have numerical ratings. This rating represents how well the character understands and comprehends that language. As long as the character has at least a rating of 1, the character has a chance to be able to speak and/or write the language and to interpret the gist of what is said or written, even if they don't catch every nuance. The higher the rating, the more fluent the character is in that language. At character creation, no character may possess a knowledge or a language skill higher than rating 6. Language skills use Intuition as their linked Attribute.

There are four types of Knowledge skills: Academic, Interests, Professional, and Street. Depending on the category, a character rolls either Knowledge skill + Intuition or Knowledge skill + Logic for the appropriate test. These tests indicate what information the character knows on a particular subject, with more net hits indicating that the character is more familiar with and has more knowledge of the subject in question. Academic knowledge is information gained through formal education, whether from a school, tutor, university, or other structured program. Interests include hobbies, experiences, and personal interests of the individual character. Professional knowledge comes from an employer or professional organization. Street knowledge includes everything a runner has picked up from life in the shadows, from drug prices to gang politics to who pays the most for stolen goods (see the **Knowledge Category Examples** table (p. 89) for more examples). When purchasing knowledge skills, a player should note which category the skill belongs to so they know which attribute (Intuition or Logic) they will need to roll on their Knowledge Tests. Sometimes, Knowledge skills may straddle multiple categories. In these cases, choose the most appropriate category for the knowledge skill based on the character and how they would use it. For example, a Corporations Knowledge skill could fit in Professional, Academic, or Street categories; a neo-anarchist with this skill would likely be focused on how corporate activities affect life on the street, so for this character it would be a Street skill.

EXAMPLE

CHOOSING SKILLS

JAMES

James selects Priority Level E for his character's skills, giving him 18 skill points to assign. At this level, James does not receive any Skill Group points. Thanks to his earlier choice of Row B in the Magic and Resonance column, he already has two skills: Compiling 4 and Registering 4. Looking over the skills list, James decides the following Active Skills would be useful at the listed ranks: Automatics 2, Computer 3, Electronic Warfare 1, Forgery 2, Hacking 5, Hardware 1, Perception 2, Pistols 2.

For Knowledge and Language skills, James receives16 free points [(Intuition 4 + Logic 4) x 2 = 16]. James selects English for his Native language, and decides that his character has picked up a little Japanese from the streets. He purchases Knowledge Skills covering BTL Dealers, Corporations, Fixers, Local Deckers, Local Technomancers, Matrix Security Measures, Mr. Johnsons, Neo-Anarchists, and Operating Systems. James assigns ratings to these skills based on the points he has available. This is how James' character looks at this point:

ACTIVE SKILLS			
Automatics	2	Compiling	4
Computer	3	Electronic Warfare	1
Forgery	2	Hacking	5
Hardware	1	Perception	2
Pistols	2	Registering	4
KNOWLEDGE SKILLS			
BTL Dealers (Street)	2	Corporations (Street)	2
Deckers (Street)	2	Fixers (Street)	1
Local Technomancers (Street)	2	Matrix Security Measures (Interests)	2
Mr. Johnsons (Street)	1	Operating Systems (Interests)	2
Neo-Anarchists (Street)	1		
LANGUAGE SKILLS			
English	N	Japanese	1

EXAMPLE, CONT.

CHOOSING SKILLS

ROB

Rob the troll street samurai has chosen to use Priority Level C for his character's skills. This gives him 28 skill points and 2 skill group points. Rob chooses the Athletics skill group for both his skill group points. Because his character is combat-orientated, Rob chooses buy Automatics 5, Blades 4, Computer 1, First Aid 2, Heavy Weapons 1, Longarms 3, Perception 1, Pilot Ground Craft 2, Pistols 2, Throwing Weapons 2, and Unarmed Combat 5.

Based on his Intuition and Logic Attribute ratings, Rob gets 12 free points to buy Knowledge and Language skills. For his Knowledge skills, Rob takes Bismarck City Knowledge, Street Clinics, UCAS Military Regulations, Fixers, and Runner Hangouts.

Rob decides that his character was stationed near the UCAS/Sioux border when in the UCAS military. While there, he picked up a little Dakota, as well as knowledge on the Sioux Nation. Rob's character's native language is English.

After massaging his skill points to fit his concept, Rob's skills look like this:

ACTIVE SKILLS			
Athletics Skill Group	2	Automatics	5
Blades	4	Computer	1
First Aid	2	Heavy Weapons	1
Longarms	3	Perception	1
Pilot Ground Craft	2	Pistols	2
Throwing Weapons	2	Unarmed Combat	5
KNOWLEDGE SKILLS			
Bismarck City (Professional)	2	UCAS Military Regulations (Professional)	2
Fixers (Street)	1	Runner Hangouts (Street)	1
Sioux Nation (Professional)	2	Street Clinics (Street)	2
LANGUAGE SKILLS			
English	N	Dakota	1

KYRA

Kyra intends to be the face of the group, so she will need to have a mix of combat skills and social skills. Since she chose Row A for her Magic or Resonance column, she already has the Spellcasting and Counterspelling skills at 5. She selects Priority Row C for her skills. Like Rob, Kyra receives 28 skill points and 2 skill group points. Kyra decides to spend her skill group points on the Conjuring skill group. Then she chooses the following skills for her character: Assensing 3, Automatics 4, Computers 1, Con 4, Etiquette 2, Locksmith 2, Negotiation 4, Perception 3, Pilot Ground Craft 2, and Pistols 3. Now that she has selected her skills, she can go back and decide which ones will be augmented by her adept powers. For her Enhanced Accuracy [Skill], she chooses her Automatics skill, and for her Improved Ability [Skill] she chooses Pistols.

Based on her character's Intuition and Logic scores, Kyra's character receives 14 skill points for knowledge and language skills [(4 + 3) x 2 = 14]. She chooses to acquire the following skills: Fixers 1, Law Enforcement Tactics 2, Organized Crime 1, Street Drug Dealers 2, Street Gang Identification 3, and Street Gang Politics 3. Kyra's character has English as her native language, but she also knows a little Sperethiel, a prominent elven language found in Tír Tairngire and Tír na nÓg.

ACTIVE SKILLS			
Spellcasting	5	Counterspelling	5
Conjuring Skill Group	2	Automatics	4
Etiquette	2	Pistols	3
Perception	3	Computer	1
Con	4	Locksmith	2
Negotiation	4	Assensing	3
Pilot Ground Craft	2		
KNOWLEDGE SKILLS			
Fixers (Street)	1	Law Enforcement Tactics (Street)	2
Organized Crime (Street)	1	Street Drug Dealers (Street)	2
Street Gang Identification (Street)	3	Street Gang Politics (Street)	3
LANGUAGE SKILLS			
English	N	Sperethiel	2

ADEPT POWERS	COST
Enhanced Accuracy (Automatics)	.25
Improved ability (Pistols)	.5
Improved Potential (Social)	.5
Mystic Armor (1 level)	.5
Voice Control (1 level)	.25

TONY
SHAS
TEEN

STEP SIX: SPEND YOUR RESOURCES

Players should only have one Priority Level left to assign to Resources. This Priority Level determines the amount of money that characters will have to spend on the gear they'll use to kick some ass, as well as a place to crash when the heat's off. See **Street Gear** (p. 421) for available equipment. In this step, you'll improve your character through spending money; any improvements made with the player's Karma fund are handled in **Step Seven: Spending Your Left Over Karma**.

The character needs to spend the vast majority of nuyen they have; by the end of this step, they may choose to hold onto 5,000 nuyen or less and add it to their **starting nuyen** (p. 95). Any nuyen remaining over 5,000 is lost and cannot be recovered. While nuyen from this step cannot be converted to Karma, players can convert some of their Karma to nuyen if they need a little more to spend. They may convert up to 10 Karma at a rate of 2,000 nuyen per Karma point for gear, which means they can have up to 20,000 extra nuyen.

If the player finds that he or she has more than the 5,000 nuyen that can be saved (or even if he or she hasn't), there are a few essential pieces of gear to consider when building a shadowrunner. You'll want a commlink (p. 438) to stay in touch and to keep your gear relatively safe from hackers. A fake SIN (p. 442), along with some fake licenses, will help smooth dealing with law enforcement or even simple purchases like buying a bus ticket or covering a bar tab. For more ideas, see the Gear Checklist sidebar.

Keep in mind there are three restrictions when it comes to purchasing gear. First, when purchasing augmentations such as cyberware and bioware, each attribute rating (Mental and Physical) can only receive an augmentation bonus of up to +4. If the attribute being raised has not reached its natural maximum limit, the attribute can be raised naturally with Karma; but at no point can augmentations exceed the +4 bonus cap. The second restriction is that at normal character creation, characters are restricted to a maximum Availability rating of 12 and a device rating of 6. After character creation, characters may be able to acquire gear that has a higher **Availability** (p. 416) and a higher device rating. Finally, all gear is subject to gamemaster approval, even if the gear falls within these restrictions.

GEAR CHECKLIST

WHAT ESSENTIAL GEAR SHOULD A CHARACTER CONSIDER BUYING?

- Weapons (Melee, Ranged, both), p. 421
- Ammunition, p. 433
- Clothing and Armor, p. 436
- Cyberware/bioware, p. 451
- Commlink, p. 438
- Fake SINs, fake licenses, p. 442
- Cyberdeck, p. 439
- Programs, p. 243
- Tools, p. 443
- Breaking and entering tools, p. 447
- Surveillance equipment, p. 443
- Lifestyle, p. 373
- Vehicle(s), p. 461
- Drones (usually owned by riggers), p. 461
- Biotech, p. 450
- Disguises, p. 443
- Sensors and sensory enhancements, p. 443
- Magical goods (foci, ritual materials, alchemical preparations, etc.), p. 316
- Certified credstick(s) (for extra cash), p. 442
- DocWagon Contract, p. 450

CYBERWARE AND BIOWARE

The most common augmentations players take to enhance their characters' attributes are cyberware and bioware (p. 451). Cyberware is technology implanted into a metahuman body, either to enhance the performance of existing organs, muscles, and systems, or to replace a part of the metahuman body completely with an artificial form that exceeds normal human limitations. Bioware, by contrast, is living technology; cells grown in laboratories and designed to work within a metahuman's body to improve on its natural design, and to add options nature never intended. Cyberware generally consumes more of a character's Essence than bioware. The drawback for bioware is its greater expense.

Note that if a character takes cyberware or bioware, it may remove a particular racial bonus. For example, if a player who has an elf character buys cybereyes, their natural low-light vision is removed and replaced with the cybereyes and whatever attributes it possesses. If the player still wants low-light vision, she'll have to select the low-light modification for the cybereyes. Similarly, orthoskin replaces the natural dermal deposits of a troll so he would no longer receive the +1 dermal armor from his natural skin hardness.

There are four grades of available cyberware and bioware: standard, alphaware, betaware, and deltaware (p. 451). Only standard gear and alphaware are available at character creation.

Cyberware and bioware augmentations are not for everyone. The physiologies for magic users and technomancers respond poorly to the loss of Essence that accompanies these augmentations. In game terms, this means that any fraction of Essence loss reduces a Magic or Resonance attribute rating by 1. This means that if a magician with Magic 5 decides to buy and install some cybereyes (Rating 4), their Essence will go from 6 to 5.5 due to the Essence cost of the cybereyes, and the magician will also lose a full point of Magic, leaving them with a Magic attribute rating of 4. The character can then lose another half a point of Essence, taking him down to 5.0, without a penalty to Magic, but if he drops below 5.0, his Magic rating is going to lose another point.

This is why so few magic users or technomancers make use of either cyberware or bioware. Those who do can find their talents burned out if too many augmentations reduce their Magic or Resonance rating to 0. For more information, see **Magic Loss** (p. 278) or **Resonance Loss** (p. 249).

Attributes boosted by cyberware or bioware do not affect the calculation for things such as points for Knowledge skills or Contacts. However, other in-game mechanics such as Initiative and Inherent Limits are modified by these augmentations, which means these bonuses need to be factored in during **Step Eight: Final Numbers** (p. 100). When calculating the Social limit using Essence, round your remaining Essence up to the nearest whole number before calculating the limit.

Augmentations need to be noted on the character sheet. The rating should be added to the natural attribute rating and the total written in parentheses next to the natural attribute rating to indicate the permanent augmented rating. For example, a character with a natural Strength rating of 4 and muscle augmentation 2 bioware should record their attribute as follows: Strength 4 (6).

LIFESTYLE

Lifestyle determines how the character lives and their monthly expenses so that they can survive. Is the character a squatter in an abandoned building? Does he survive by dumpster diving? Does the character live in a rundown apartment? Or has the character found a way to own her own home? Depending on the answers to these questions, the character may have a Street, Squatter, Low, Middle, High, or Luxury lifestyle. More information on lifestyles can be found on p. 373.

STARTING NUYEN

No more than 5,000 nuyen (or less) of any unspent money from the funds available for character creation carries over to game play. The rest of the character's starting nuyen is determined by the lifestyle the player has purchased for his character and the formula for that lifestyle specified by the Starting Nuyen Table. The player rolls the designated number of dice, then applies the modifier appropriate to their character's Lifestyle. The result is added to any funds the player has left over after buying gear.

LIFESTYLE COSTS TABLE

LIFESTYLE	COST
Street	Free
Squatter	500¥
Low	2,000¥
Middle	5,000¥
High	10,000¥
Luxury	100,000¥

STARTING NUYEN TABLE

LIFESTYLE	STARTING NUYEN
Street	1D6 x 20¥
Squatter	2D6 x 40¥
Low	3D6 x 60¥
Middle	4D6 x 100¥
High	5D6 x 500¥
Luxury	6D6 x 1,000¥

EXAMPLE

BUYING GEAR

JAMES

James assigns his final Priority Level, level A, to Resources. This gives James 450,000 nuyen with which to buy gear. Here is what he picks up:

GEAR	COST	GEAR	COST
Defiance EX Shocker	210¥	Jammer, area (Rating 4)	800¥
Ceska Black Scorpion	270¥	Jammer, directional (Rating 6)	1,200¥
Ares Crusader II	830¥	10 fake SINs (Rating 4)	100,000¥
HK-227	730¥	10 fake Licenses (gun license, Rating 4)	8,000¥
Concealable holsters (2)	300¥	Goggles (Capacity 6)	300¥
Silencers (3)	1,500¥	Low-light vision modification	500¥
Taser dart (100)	5,000¥	Smartlink modification	2,000¥
Regular ammo (1,000 rounds)	2,000¥	Flare compensation	250¥
Explosive ammo (500 rounds)	40,000¥	Image link	25¥
Stick-n-shock (80 rounds)	6,400¥	Earbuds (Capacity 3)	150¥
APDS rounds (300 rounds)	36,000¥	Audio enhancement 2	1,000¥
Flash-bang grenades (5)	500¥	Select sound filter 1	250¥
Chameleon suit	1,700¥	Handheld scanner (Capacity 2, atmosphere sensor 3, cyberware scanner 3)	800¥
Armor jacket w/ fire resistance 4	2,000¥	2 Medkits (Rating 6)	3,000¥
Armor clothing	450¥	5 Medkit supplies	500¥
Transys Avalon commlink w/ sim module	5,100¥	Dream chips (5)	100¥
Ares Roadmaster	52,000¥	Mood chips (5)	250¥
Trodes	70¥	6 spare clips	30¥
Super Platinum DocWagon Contract (1 year)	100,000¥	Middle Lifestyle (12 months)	60,000¥
Low Lifestyle (safe house, 3 months)	6,000¥	Carryover Starting Nuyen	4,995¥
Total			**425,005¥**
Starting Nuyen: Middle Lifestyle (4D6 x 100) + 4,995¥ = 7,195¥			

His carryover of 4,995 nuyen plus his starting nuyen gives him 7,195 at the start of play.

EXAMPLE, CONT.

BUYING GEAR

ROB

Rob has Priority row D for his resources, which means he has 50,000 nuyen with which to purchase gear. Rob's character also has it harder than most other metatypes because he is a troll and has the racial disadvantage of having to pay one hundred percent more for Lifestyle expenses. Rob decides to get more nuyen for his gear by converting 10 Karma into 20,000 nuyen, raising his purchasing fund to 70,000 nuyen. This leaves him with only 15 Kama for improving his character later.

Here's the gear Rob gets for his street samurai:

GEAR	COST	GEAR	COST
FN HAR	1,500¥	1 fake SIN (Rating 4)	10,000¥
Colt Cobra TZ-120	660¥	1 fake gun license (Rating 4)	800¥
Ares Predator V	725¥	Certified credstick, silver	20¥
Katana	1,000¥	Renraku Sensei commlink	1,000¥
Knucks (hardliner gloves)	100¥	High explosive grenades (3)	300¥
Armor jacket (w/ nonconductivity 4)	2,000¥	Explosive ammo (50 rounds)	400¥
Reaction enhancers 2	26,000¥	Hollow point ammo (20 rounds)	140¥
Regular ammo (300 rounds)	600¥	9 spare clips	45¥
Flash bang grenades	500¥	Low Lifestyle (3 months; price increased by 100%)	12,000¥
Contacts [Capacity 2, w/ vision enhancement 2]	1,400¥	Bone lacing (plastic)	8,000¥
Carryover Nuyen: 2,785¥		**Total: 70,000¥**	
Starting Nuyen (3D6 x 60) + 2,785¥ = 3,505¥			

KYRA

Kyra's remaining Priority row is E. This means that she has only 6,000 nuyen to spend on gear. She decides to spend 10 Karma now for an additional 20,000 nuyen, which brings her up to 26,000 nuyen. This leaves her with only 16 Karma to improve her character later. Her purchases are as follows:

GEAR	COST	GEAR	COST
Browning Ultra Power	640¥	Fake magic license (Rating 3)	600¥
Uzi IV	450¥	Steyr TMP	350¥
Armor jacket	1,000¥	Regular ammo (200 rounds)	400¥
Renraku Sensei commlink	1,000¥	Autopicker (Rating 3)	1,600¥
Yamaha Growler	5,000¥	Fake gun license (Rating 3)	600¥
Bliss (5 doses)	75¥	Miniwelder	350¥
Low Lifestyle (2 months)	4,000¥	Gel ammo (70 rounds)	175¥
Fake SIN (Rating 3)	7,500¥	Certified credstick, silver	20¥
Fake driver's license (Rating 4)	800¥		
Initial Total: 26,000¥		**Carryover Nuyen: 1,640¥**	
Starting Nuyen (3D6 x 60) + 1,640¥ = 2,225¥			

STEP SEVEN: SPENDING YOUR LEFTOVER KARMA

This step is the player's last opportunity to polish her character before making the final calculations. By this time the player should have a pretty good idea of her character's backstory and what she wants her character to look like. Any remaining Karma can now be invested in smoothing out any rough edges, picking up or improving skills, buying additional spells, acquiring bound spirits, bonding foci to be used at the start of the game, purchasing contacts, etc. Refer to the **Additional Purchases and Restrictions** table to note any special restrictions on purchasing items with Karma. If a player wishes to keep some Karma for use later in the game, she may do so, though the maximum carryover is 7 Karma. When raising skills and attributes, keep in mind the various restrictions of character creation: Only one attribute can be at the natural attribute limit, and gear is restricted to items with Device Ratings of 6 or less or an Availability of 12 or less. These rules still apply to when you are spending Karma.

When spending Karma for attributes or skills, refer to the rules for improving the character in the **Character Advancement** section (p. 103).

EXAMPLE CONTACTS

- Arms dealer
- Smuggler
- Mobster
- Corporate wageslave
- Fixer
- Talismonger (seller of magical goods)
- Beat cop on the take
- Rigger
- Mechanic
- Street doc

CONTACTS

Contacts are a vital part of a shadowrunner's life. Contacts sell illegal or hard-to-obtain items, alert runners to potential employment, know someone who knows someone who knows something the runner wants to know, or are knowledgeable about the layout of a heavily guarded corporate compound. Some contacts can supply substances runners are addicted too, fence stolen goods, and maybe, if they're loyal enough, bail the shadowrunner out of the Lone Star holding cell. Having a wide variety of Contacts can be a valuable investment. Every character receives free Karma to spend on their initial contacts. This Karma is equal to a Character's Charisma rating x 3.

Each Contact has a Connection and a Loyalty rating. Any Contacts a player buys must have a minimum rating of 1 in Connection and a minimum rating of 1 in Loyalty. Connection represents how much reach and influence a Contact has, both within the shadows and in the world at large, to get things done or to make things happen. Loyalty reflects how loyal the contact is to the runner and how much they'll endure without

ADDITIONAL PURCHASES & RESTRICTIONS

ITEM	KARMA COST (AT CHARACTER CREATION)	RESTRICTION
Bound Spirits	1 Karma per service (Force of spirit is equal to Character's Magic Attribute rating)	Can only have a number of bound spirits equal to Charisma
Complex Forms	4 Karma per complex form	Maximum number of complex forms at character creation equal to Logic Attribute
Spells	5 Karma per spell	Maximum number of spells/rituals/ preparations known at Character Creation equals Magic Rating x 2
Bond Foci	Variable; see p. 318 for bonding costs of foci	Maximum total Force of all foci that can be bonded at character creation is equal to character's Magic Rating x 2
Contacts	1 Karma for each point of Connections Rating, 1 Karma for each Loyalty Rating (minimum Karma requirement = 2)	A single contact may not have more than 7 Karma spent on them at character creation. There are no limits on how many contacts the character may purchase
Registering Sprites	1 Karma per task (Level of Sprite equal to Character's Resonance Rating)	Can only have a number of Registered Sprites equal to the character's Charisma

EXAMPLE

FINAL STEPS

JAMES

James is ready to spend his final 26 Karma on his character. He notes he is missing a couple of key skills: Software and Cybercombat. Looking over the **Karma Advancement Table for Skills** (p. 107), James decides to add both Cybercombat and Software skills at rating 2. He determines that it will cost him 6 Karma each to buy the skills at rating 2 (2 Karma for the first point + 4 Karma for the second point). James makes those changes to his character sheet, subtracting 12 from his Karma fund. With 14 Karma left, James decides to invest 4 Karma in raising his Electronic Warfare to 2; he then uses 4 Karma to buy a complex form (Resonance Spike). James spends his last 6 Karma registering 2 sprites (crack sprite and fault sprite) with 3 tasks each; the sprites have a level equal to his Resonance, which is 6. Here are his final active skills, complex forms, and sprites:

ACTIVE SKILLS			
Automatics	2	Compiling	4
Computer	3	Cybercombat	2
Electronic Warfare	2	Forgery	2
Hacking	5	Hardware	1
Perception	2	Pistols	2
Registering	4	Software	2
COMPLEX FORMS			
Cleaner		Editor	
Resonance Spike			
REGISTERED SPRITES (3 TASKS EACH)			
Crack Sprite (Level 6)		Fault Sprite (Level 6)	

James now needs to pick out contacts. Based on his Charisma score, James has 9 Karma to spend on his contacts' Connection and Loyalty ratings. James has decided that his character is a neo-anarchist. His contacts will be a neo-anarchist lieutenant, a fixer, and a fence. James assigns 4 Karma to his neo-anarchist lieutenant, 2 Karma to his fence, and 3 Karma to his fixer, as follows:

CONTACT	CONNECTION	LOYALTY
Neo-Anarchist Lieutenant	2	2
Fence	1	1
Fixer	2	1

ROB

Rob's street samurai has 16 Karma left to spend, and Rob knows he cannot afford to raise any of his attributes at this time, so he looks at his active skills. Ron desperately needs to raise his Perception skill. He spends 4 Karma raising his Perception skill to 2. Rob would also like to raise his Heavy Weapons skill rating from 1 to 2. This also costs 4 Karma, leaving him with 8. Rob then decides to raise his First Aid skill from 2 to 3. This increase costs Rob 6 Karma. Rob only has 2 Karma left, so he decides to raise his Language skill from 1 to 2 in Dakota. Rob's character's skills look like this:

ACTIVE SKILLS			
Athletics Skill Group	2	Automatics	5
Blades	4	First Aid	3
Computer	1	Heavy Weapons	2
Longarms	3	Perception	2
Pilot Ground Craft	2	Pistols	2
Throwing Weapons	2	Unarmed Combat	5
LANGUAGE SKILLS			
English	N	Dakota	2

With his character's Charisma attribute of 3, Rob has 9 Karma to spend on contacts. He keeps it simple:

CONTACT	CONNECTION	LOYALTY
Street Doc	2	2
Fixer	2	2

KYRA

Kyra also has 16 Karma left for improving her character. She increases her Etiquette skill from 2 to 3, costing 6 Karma and leaving her with 10. She decides to start the game with two bound spirits—a Water spirit and a Beast spirit—each capable with 4 services. That costs her 8 Karma. The spirits have Force ratings equal to Kyra's Magic rating of 6. Kyra decides to carry the 2 Karma she has left over into the game. Her skills now look like this:

ACTIVE SKILLS			
Spellcasting	5	Counterspelling	5
Conjuring Skill Group	2	Automatics	4
Etiquette	3	Pistols	3
Perception	3	Computer	1
Con	4	Locksmith	2
Negotiation	4	Assensing	3
Pilot Ground Craft	2		
BOUND SPIRITS (4 SERVICES)			
Water Spirit (Force 6)		Beast Spirit (Force 6)	

Continued next page

EXAMPLE, CONT.

Kyra has 18 Karma to spend on contacts (Charisma 6 x 3). Because she has ties with the Ancients, an all-elven go-gang, she decides to have two contacts with them—a lieutenant and a rank-and-file gag member. Kyra's character also needs a drug dealer for her mild addiction to the street drug bliss, a talismonger from whom she can purchase magic goods, and a street doc who knows how to treat Awakened. These are the contacts Kyra has selected for her character:

CONTACT	CONNECTION	LOYALTY
Ancients lieutenant	3	3
Ancients member	1	2
Drug dealer	1	1
Talismonger	3	1
Street doc	3	1

shattering whatever bond the two have. At Loyalty 1 or 2, the Contact has only a business relationship with the character. Any qualms they have about turning the runner in are tied to profits they may lose if the runner isn't around, not so much because of any close personal feelings. With a higher Loyalty rating, the Contact has a stronger and more personal relationship (i.e., friendship) with the character, and is more likely to take some risk or go out of his way to help the character. For specific rules on the use of Contacts, see p. 386.

STEP EIGHT: FINAL CALCULATIONS

At this point, characters are basically done, though there are several derived mechanics that must be calculated before they are ready to be played. Since many of these are adjusted by augmentations, it is best to wait until all decisions have been made on skills and attributes before making these calculations.

As explained previously, Initiative determines the order that characters act in combat situations. Initiative is also rolled to determine whether a character is surprised in a combat situation. This pool is determined by adding Intuition + Reaction. Both non-augmented and augmented attributes should be added together and listed the same as attributes, with the non-augmented number first followed by the augmented number in parentheses. Also be sure to note the number of Initiative Dice the character gets; all characters start with 1 (noted as 1D6) and can receive additional dice from augmentations. These should be listed after the Initiative Rating so the listing looks like this: 9 (11) + 2D6.

There is also Matrix Initiative for those that are in the Matrix, and Astral Initiative for magic users and spirits in astral space. Matrix Initiative is determined by whether a character is in cold-sim or hot-sim. For details see **Astral Initiative** (p. 229) or **Matrix Initiative** (p. 313).

Inherent limits are limits imposed on a character by their physiological or psychological makeup; all characters have them. See **Tests and Limits** (p. 46) for more information. The formulas for these inherent limits are given in the **Final Calculations** table. When calculating all Inherent limits, round the result up to the nearest whole number. For Social limits, round up Essence to the nearest whole number prior to calculating the cost.

Every character has a Condition Monitor that tells the player how much Physical and Stun damage they can take before falling unconscious. The formulae for these are found in the **Final Calculations** table. For more information on using the Condition Monitor, see **Damage**, p. 169.

Technomancers possess what is called a **Living Persona** in the Matrix. This Living Persona has specific attributes that are used instead of their normal physical or mental attributes. Information on the Living Persona can be found on p. 250.

CHARACTER CREATION CHECKLIST

To make sure your character is ready to rock with a minimum of complication and hassle, here's a checklist of things to remember when designing a shadowrunner.

- Make sure you choose each row of the **Priority Table** once.
- Remember to make **note of any applicable racial advantages or disadvantages** (thermal vision, low-light vision) on your character sheet for game play.
- Check to make sure you have **raised your Edge and/or Magic or Resonance** with your special attribute points that your character received when you selected your metatype.
- Make sure you have **spent all your attribute points.** Your character may only have one Physical or Mental Attribute at the natural attribute maximum limit (or 1 higher with the Exceptional Attribute quality) at character creation. This rule does not apply to Edge, Magic, or Resonance. These can be at their maximum if the player has the points to raise them that far.
- In the Magic or Resonance column, double-check to make sure you have **recorded all the benefits from that priority level on your character sheet** (if applicable). Aspected magicians only receive skills from the one category they select (Sorcery, Conjuring, or Enchanting) they select. Mystic adepts do not get their Power Points for free like other adepts, but must spend 2 Karma per Power Point.
- **Review the qualities that you have purchased and make all requisite changes to your stats.** Make certain to note the bonuses or negative modifiers on your character sheet.
- **Check to make sure you have spent all your skill and skill group points on Active, Knowledge, and Language skills.** Make sure you have all the specializations that you desire from spending priority points. Review skill groups and the individual skills you have bought to verify there are no duplications.
- **Review the gear that you have purchased with your resources.** Make sure you have acquired everything you want, and double-check for things you may have forgotten (commlinks, cyberdecks, ammo, vehicles, Lifestyles, fake SINs and licenses, etc.). If you are playing a dwarf or a troll, make certain you have taken their gear cost modifiers into consideration. You may convert up to 10 Karma into nuyen (20,000 nuyen). You may carry over 5,000 nuyen from your resources and add them to your starting nuyen.
- **Make sure you have calculated your Essence, Initiative, and Inherent Limits, and acquired contacts.**
- **Review your Karma expenditures, and spend any remaining that you wish.** Remember, you can carry up to 7 Karma from character creation into the game.

FINAL CALCULATIONS TABLE

MECHANIC	FORMULA	AUGMENTATION BONUSES
Initiative	(Intuition + Reaction) + 1D6	Add appropriate attribute and Initiative Dice bonuses
Astral Initiative	(Intuition x 2) + 2D6	—
Matrix AR Initiative	(Intuition + Reaction) + 1D6	—
Matrix VR Initiative (Cold Sim)	(Data Processing + Intuition) + 3D6	—
Matrix VR Initiative (Hot Sim)	(Data Processing + Intuition) + 4D6	—
Inherent Limits	Add appropriate attribute(s); calculate as listed below	—
Mental	[(Logic x 2) + Intuition + Willpower] / 3 (round up)	—
Physical	[(Strength x 2) + Body + Reaction] / 3 (round up)	—
Social	[(Charisma x 2) + Willpower + Essence] / 3 (round up)	—
Condition Monitor Boxes	Calculate as listed below	—
Physical	[Body / 2] + 8	Add bonuses to Body before calculating; round up final results
Stun	[Willpower / 2] + 8	Add bonuses to Willpower before calculating; round up final results
Overflow	Body + Augmentation bonuses	—
Living Persona		—
Attack	Charisma	—
Data Processing	Logic	—
Device Rating	Resonance	—
Firewall	Willpower	—
Sleaze	Intuition	—
Reputation		
Notoriety	Public Awareness	Street Cred

EXAMPLE

FINAL CALCULATIONS

JAMES

Reviewing his character, James calculates the following that are relevant to his character:

LIVING PERSONA	
Attack	5
Data Processing	6
Device Rating	6
Firewall	5 (+1 with the Natural Hardening quality against Biofeedback)
Sleaze	6
INITIATIVES	
(Physical) Initiative	6 + 1D6
Matrix Initiative (cold-sim)	10 + 3D6
Matrix Initiative (hot-sim)	10 + 4D6
INHERENT LIMITS	
Mental	5
Physical	4
Social	5
CONDITION MONITOR	
Physical Condition Monitor	10
Stun Condition Monitor	10
Overflow Boxes	3

ROB

Rob's final calculations for his character looks like this:

INITIATIVES	
(Physical) Initiative	6 (8) + 1D6
INHERENT LIMITS	
Mental	5
Physical	12
Social	6
CONDITION MONITOR	
Physical Condition Monitor	13
Stun Condition Monitor	11
Overflow Boxes	9 (10) (modified by the character's Will to Live quality)

KYRA

For Kyra's character, her final calculations are:

INITIATIVES	
(Physical) Initiative	7 + 1D6
INHERENT LIMITS	
Mental	5
Physical	4
Social	8 (9) (modified by character's Improve Potential Adept Power)
CONDITION MONITOR	
Physical Condition Monitor	13
Stun Condition Monitor	11
Overflow Boxes	3

STEP NINE:
FINAL TOUCHES

FINALIZE BACKGROUND OF CHARACTER, GET GM APPROVAL

Even though the stats are done and the character sheet is filled out, you're not quite finished. You still need to get the gamemaster approval before play begins. Hopefully, the gamemaster has been actively involved in this process, guiding character creation to help ensure the campaign is both fun and satisfying. If the gamemaster was not involved in the character creation process, players may need to make revisions to their characters that will allow them to get the most out of the of campaign the gamemaster envisions running. For a successful game, all parties should be willing to be flexible and make adjustments that will work for everyone while playing and enjoying *Shadowrun* (for more advice on working as a group with the gamemaster, see the **Gamemaster Advice** chapter, p. 332).

In the final stage you should also flesh out the backstory for the character. Qualities, attribute ratings, and contacts provide a blueprint of who these characters are now. But what are their stories? Why are they shadowrunners? What aliases are they known by? How did they earn their street names? Their scars? What are their real names? Who are their friends? Their enemies? How old are they? If a character possesses a piece of gear that they cannot use right now, what is the story behind that? If they have cyberlimbs, was that by choice or out of necessity? The more interesting the background, the more possibilities for interesting role-playing scenarios that can add flavor and diversity to a game.

CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT

Character generation is only the start. Your character will go on some runs, pick up some Karma and nuyen, and then look for ways to get better at what he does. Character advancement rules tell you how to build your runner from a street novice to a big, bad, fire-breathing street legend. (Gamemasters: for information on awarding Karma, see **Gamemaster Advice**, p. 332).

Karma advancement works similar to the way you spent Karma at the end of character creation to customize the character, improve skills and attributes, and purchase things like bound spirits and registered sprites, but with one fundamental difference. When you create your character, it's assumed your character has taken the time needed to develop and improve whatever skills he possesses. Once roleplaying starts, though, he's going to need time to get better at his skills. He cannot, for example, simply rise from a Blades skill of 5 to Blades 6 overnight. He must train, possibly under the instruction of a master, and practice, practice, practice to improve his skill. This training and practice normally takes place during the runner's downtime.

The time it takes to improve an attribute or skill is meant to reflect the in-world time a character must invest in improving his abilities and is measured in days, weeks, or months. The higher the rating in a skill or attribute, the more difficult and time-consuming it is to advance to the next level. Some qualities, such as Dependents, extend this timeframe. This training time can be interrupted by going out on runs or doing other activities, but the character must resume his interrupted training as quickly as possible. Waiting too long before getting back into training can result in losing the benefits of previous sessions and having to start from the beginning again. Karma for the new or improved rating of an attribute or skill does

EXAMPLE

CHARACTER BACKSTORIES

JAMES

The technomancer that James is playing grew up on the streets of Seattle. He was born to SINless parents in 2056. His real name is Andrew Mason, but goes by the street name of "Mega Pulse." He lost his parents when he was nine years old; they were neo-anarchists who were captured by the Mitsuhama megacorporation when they attempted to sabotage an illegal dumping facility. Andrew never saw his parents again.

Fortunately for him, their neo-anarchist cell was close-knit, and the members took Andrew in. When he was ten years old, Mason's technomancer abilities began to emerge. Mason was smart enough to hide his abilities, and no one outside his close adoptive family suspected he was a technomancer. Calling himself Mega Pulse, he used his technomancer abilities to aid his family and their cause. He hacked into megacorporate nodes and hosts, retrieving information neo-anarchists could use to expose and disrupt their machinations. He helped vandalize corporate Matrix sites and did whatever else he could to undermine the power of the corporations and free metahumanity from corporate oppression and exploitation. Mega Pulse recently hacked a corporate node to generate documents proving he, in the guise of one of his fake SINs, owned an Ares Roadmaster belonging to Ares Macrotechnology. Although he himself cannot drive, Mega Pulse is more than happy to allow the neo-anarchists to use the liberated vehicle to further their cause. And to take it out on a joyride from time to time.

Now nineteen, Mega Pulse has turned to shadowrunning. Ostensibly he works mainly for profit, but he's always on the lookout for some dirt on the megacorporations. He actively seeks out runs against the Big Ten, using every opportunity to access more of their networks, collecting as much information as he can to pass along to his family cell. Along the way, Mega Pulse has discovered he has a flair for shadowrunning and that he enjoys it. He's still dedicated to the cause, but he also enjoys making a living and hopes to move beyond a low Lifestyle in the near future.

Mega Pulse pities the wageslaves working for the megacorporations, ignorant of the oppression they constantly endure. He is more hostile toward the managers and executives, because he believes they are the ones allowing the corporations to continue acting as they are. Mega Pulse has been wrapped up in this mindset for a long time, so it tends to surface in his normal conversation.

ROB

Rob's character is named Tyson Hughes. His street name is "The Hammer," due to the fact that he can hit like a sledgehammer. The Hammer was born in Boston to a middle-class family in 2053. His family members were SINners, his father a career military noncom, and when he was born he was issued his national SIN for the UCAS. At age 18, Tyson enlisted in the UCAS army out of pressure from his father, but he quickly realized he was not suited to military life. As one of only a few trolls in the UCAS army, he felt adrift in a sea of humans. Many humans, in turn, despised trogs and felt Tyson should not be in the army. His supervisors saw him and other trolls as front-line cannon fodder. He knew he was drawing risky and dangerous deployments due to the fact that his commanders believed he could easily survive much more punishment than his fellow human soldiers. He was stationed at Bismarck, North Dakota, and assigned border patrol duty along the Sioux Nation border—a very dangerous assignment due to the many skirmishes between the UCAS army and the Sioux Special Forces units, the Wildcats.

Tyson became frustrated and bitter during his four-year tour in Bismarck. Despite his best efforts to emulate his father's career and keep his record clean, he was routinely passed over for promotion. He did not receive overt explanations, but to him it seemed pretty clear that prejudice would prevent him from ever rising above the rank of private first class. Altercations with soldiers in his unit became common, and in every instance he was cited as the perpetrator; he was frequently written up—unfairly, he thought—for insubordination. Tyson began getting more aggressive with in skirmishes with the Sioux Wildcats and smugglers his unit caught crossing the border. He was written up repeatedly for use of excessive force. Eventually Tyson's superiors had enough. In mid-2074, they gave him a Bad Conduct Discharge. Tyson tried for months to find legitimate work, but being a troll and having a Bad Conduct Discharge on his record made employers wary. At the end of 2074, Tyson decided to make a change, and he moved to Seattle to make a fresh start.

Unfortunately, his Bad Conduct Discharge followed him, and still no legitimate employer was willing to take a chance on giving him a job. By 2075, Tyson realized he had no choice but to turn to the shadows to survive. Despite having a very useful skill set, Tyson found many smugglers in particular did not want to work with him. Smuggling networks span the continent, and local smugglers knew all about Tyson's reputation for brutality against their chummers along the UCAS/Sioux border; none would work with him. In fact, if he needs to travel, smugglers charge him double the going rates.

Tyson has come to regret his actions against smugglers when he was in the army, and he wants a shot at redemption. He will work to improve his reputation with the local smugglers and prove he has changed.

EXAMPLE, CONT.

CHARACTER BACKSTORIES

KYRA

Kyra's character is called "Silver" in the streets due to both her silver tongue and her silver hair. Silver is notorious for being able to talk almost anyone into giving her what she wants. When her negotiating skills don't take care of business, she can resort to either magic or firearms, and her skills with both make her deadly.

Silver was born in 2053 in Puyallup, a district of Seattle. Her given name was Catlin Moore. She was born into Tarislar, an elven enclave made up of exiles from Tir Tairngire, and metahumans who fled from other parts of Seattle during the Night of Rage. Tarislar can be a dangerous place, and in September 2061—commonly known as the Year of the Comet—her father was killed during the panic and violence triggered by an eruption of SURGE in Tarislar's population. Her mother did what she could to raise Silver on her own, but in early 2064, her mother died from pneumonia. Shortly after that, Silver was recruited into the street gang known as the Ancients. The Ancients helped Silver survive many threats to the sprawl, not the least of which was the second Matrix Crash that occurred later in the year. Silver has been riding with the Ancients ever since she was old enough to handle a bike.

Although her loyalties are still with the Ancients (she still has their tattoos and her bike is still custom painted with their symbol, a bright green "A" in the center of a bright-green circle), she's looking to do more with her life. Being a mystic adept, she feels she has a lot to offer a runner team. She follows a totem identified as "Sea." Her manner of casting spells and summoning spirits is steeped in the shamanic tradition. Despite becoming a shadowrunner, Silver will still ride with the Ancients during her downtime, no matter the problems that may cause for her or her chummers.

not need to be paid until the character has fully completed their training period. For the duration of training required per attribute or skill rating, refer to the **Training Rate Table**. This time can be reduced with the help of an instructor (see **Using Instruction**, p. 141).

The time it takes to improve attributes cannot be decreased. Building muscle for Body or Strength, or improving cognitive functions, always takes a serious investment of time. Note that you can't improve Physical or Mental attributes during the same downtime period when you receive implants or augmentations that improve those same attributes. That downtime is used solely for recovery from the augmentation implanting process and for getting used to their body's new modifications. The character will have to wait to the next downtime to begin training for another improvement. A character may only train to improve one Mental and one Physical attribute, or one attribute and one skill, in a single downtime period.

Skills can be taught for improvement purposes. If the player is able to find an instructor to train him and help him perfect his techniques, the time it takes improve his skill is reduced by 25 percent (round down). If the character chooses to focus on improving only skills during a downtime, the character may choose to learn or improve a number of skills up to their Logic rating divided by 2 (round up). Specializations for skills take 1 month of dedicated training to learn and cannot be learned at the same time as anything else. Skill groups are improved at a rate of [new Rating] x 2 weeks. A character in the process of training to improve a skill group cannot learn or improve any other attributes or skills at the same time. Improving a skill group is considered time consuming and focus intensive.

Edge is a unique quality. Because it reflects the character's luck, it requires no special amount of time to raise. Edge can be raised anytime the character has the Karma to do so.

ATTRIBUTE AND SKILL TABLES

The cost to improve an attribute is new Rating x 5 Karma. The calculations for these improvements have already been made in the Karma Advancement Table. To use the table, first find your current Rating in the Starting Rating column on the left, then move to the right until you are in the column whose header matches your desired new rating. For example, if you are raising an Attribute from 4 to 5, find 4 in the Starting Rating column, and move to the right along the row until you find the desired Rating (column 5, in this case). In this case the entry is 25, which means you need to pay 25 Karma for the attribute rating increase (which is equal to Rating 5 x 5 Karma). If you wanted to go from 4 to 6, you'd move one column further to the right and see that you needed a total of 55 Karma to make this increase.

The maximum number of ratings you can increase a single Attribute by in any given period of downtime during a campaign is 2. If you wish to raise the Attribute any further, you will have to wait for more downtime.

The skill table works on a similar principle, though Active Skill ratings costs are computed at new Rating x 2. If you are purchasing a brand new skill, find the desired rating on the table and pay that cumulative amount. For example, if you are purchasing the running skill for the first time, and are buying it up to Rating 3, you will pay

12 Karma. To go from 7 to 8 in a skill, you will pay 16 Karma (rating 8 x 2 Karma). To calculate the cost of jumping more than one level, subtract the number in the column with your current Rating from the number in the column with your desired higher Rating. Knowledge and Language skills work in a similar manner, though their cost is only new Rating x 1. A character may raise the Rating of their Active, Knowledge, or Language skills up by a maximum of 3 rating points per any one downtime. To raise the skill(s) any further, they have to wait for another period of downtime.

Active Skill Groups cost new Rating x 5 to raise and can only be raised by 1 rating per downtime.

LEARNING COMPLEX FORMS

To gain access to a new complex form, a technomancer must spend 4 Karma. Details on learning complex forms can be found in the **Resonance Library** section (p. 252).

LEARNING MAGIC

Aspected magicians, magicians, and mystic adepts may purchase new spells, rituals, or preparations to use (see **Magic**, p. 276). The magic user must spend 5 Karma to learn the spell, ritual, or preparation. For details on how to learn magic, see p. 299.

QUALITIES

There are two ways for a character to pick up new qualities. First, they can be assigned by the gamemaster as a result of events or actions in the course of a campaign. Positive qualities may be assigned as reward for good roleplaying, while Negative qualities may be assigned if something traumatic or significant happens or the character does something for which the Negative quality is a reasonable consequence ("reasonable" is defined by the gamemaster). A player may also purchase Positive qualities for his character at any time during game play. The cost for purchasing a Positive quality during game play is the listed Karma cost x 2. Similarly, if a character wishes to get rid of a Negative quality, has met any stipulated requirements, and the gamemaster has given the player permission, the player may do so at a rate of listed Karma x 2.

EXAMPLE

CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT

JAMES

After a couple of runs, James has earned 20 Karma, and his gamemaster has given him two weeks of downtime. Looking over his character sheet and reviewing his options, James decides that he would like to raise his character's Reaction, from 2 to 3. According to the table for attributes this advance will cost 15 Karma, which he has It normally takes 3 weeks to raise an attribute to Rating 3, but Mega Pulse has the Dependents quality, which adds fifty percent to any training time, so it will take him 4.5 weeks. He will not be able to raise his Reaction during this two-week downtime period, but he will have time to do so during the next scheduled downtime. Since James can also raise a skill during this same time period and he has 5 Karma left, he chooses to raise his Hardware skill from 1 to 2. This uses 4 Karma. The base training time for his Hardware skill is 2 days (2 x 1 day), but with his Dependents quality, it takes him 3 days. He has 1 Karma remaining; he can do no more training for anything else for this downtime

ROB

Rob's character has 21 Karma to spend (20 earned on runs and the 1 Karma left from character creation he carried over into the game). With the Hammer's Logic being a 3, Rob knows that he can raise two skills during this two-week downtime. He chooses to raise his Throwing Weapons skill to 3 and his Pistols skill to 3. Doing so costs the Hammer 12 Karma. Raising a skill to Rating 3 takes 3 days. Rob's is able to train for both skills at once, so he trains for a total of 3 days. His Karma is spent, and he is ready to go on the next run.

KYRA

Kyra wants to raise two of Silver's skills (her Logic score allows her to raise two skills at a time). She would like to raise her Spellcasting skill from 5 to 6, which will cost her 12 Karma (new Rating x 2). Fortunately, she has that amount. Kyra knows it will take her 6 weeks to raise her skill to that level, so she decides to find an instructor. She talks to her talismonger, who points her to someone willing to teach her (for nuyen, of course). This reduces the time Kyra's character needs to train by 25 percent, so it drops from 6 weeks to 4.5 weeks. Kyra also spends 6 Karma raising her Locksmith skill, taking it from a 2 to a 3. This takes Kyra 3 days to accomplish. For the rest of her downtime, she continues to work with her instructor on improving her Spellcasting skill. The next downtime, Kyra will be able to raise another skill while still working on her Spellcasting skill.

KARMA ADVANCEMENT TABLE FOR ATTRIBUTES

STARTING RATING	DESIRED RATING 2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1	10	25	45	70	100	135	—	—	—	—
2	—	15	35	60	90	125	165	—	—	—
3	—	—	20	45	75	110	150	195	—	—
4	—	—	—	25	55	90	130	175	225	—
5	—	—	—	—	30	65	105	150	200	(255)
6	—	—	—	—	—	35	75	120	170	(225)
7	—	—	—	—	—	—	40	85	135	(190)
8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	45	95	(150)
9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	50	(105)
10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	(55)

Numbers in parentheses () are only available to characters with the correct quality.

KARMA ADVANCEMENT TABLE FOR SKILLS

SKILL	DESIRED RATING 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	(13)
Active Skill	2	6	12	20	30	42	56	72	90	110	132	156	182
Active Skill Group	5	15	30	50	75	105	140	180	225	275	330	390	455
Knowledge Skills	1	3	6	10	15	21	28	36	45	55	66	78	91
Language Skills	1	3	6	10	15	21	28	36	45	55	66	78	91

Numbers in parentheses () are only available to characters with the correct quality.

CHARACTER IMPROVEMENT TABLE

IMPROVEMENT	KARMA COST
New specialization (for Active, Knowledge, or Language)	7
New Knowledge/Language Skill	1
New Positive quality	Karma cost x 2
Remove a Negative quality	Bonus Karma Value x 2
New complex form	4
New initiate level	10 + (Grade x 3)
New spell	5

TRAINING RATE TABLE

IMPROVEMENT	RATE
Improving an attribute (Mental, Physical, Magic, Resonance)	New Rating x 1 week
Improving Edge	No time required
Improving a skill	
Rating 1–4	New Rating x 1 day
Rating 5–8	New Rating x 1 week
Rating 9–13	New Rating x 2 weeks
Improving a skill group	New Rating x 2 weeks
New specialization	1 month

After the character creation process, James', Rob's and Kyra's characters look like this (prior to gamemaster approval):

SHADOWRUN®

CHARACTER Mega Pulse (Technomancer)
PLAYER James
NOTES

PERSONAL DATA

NAME/PRIMARY ALIAS Andrew Mason / Mega Pulse

Metatype Human **Ethnicity**

Age	Sex	Height	Weight

Street Cred	Notoriety	Public Awareness
0	0	0

Karma 0 **Total Karma** **Misc**

CORE COMBAT INFO

Primary Armor Armor Jacket 12

Primary Ranged Weapon Ares Crusador II

Dam	Acc	AP	Mode	RC	Ammo
7P	5	—	SS/BF	2	40 (c)

Primary Melee Weapon

Reach	Dam	Acc	AP

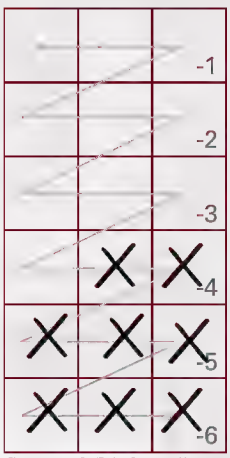
ATTRIBUTES

Body	3	Essence	6
Agility	2	Magic/Resonance	6
Reaction	2	Initiative	6 + 1D6
Strength	3	Matrix Initiative	10 H / 10 C
Willpower	3	Astral Initiative	
Logic	4	Composure	6
Intuition	4	Judge Intentions	7
Charisma	3	Memory	7
Edge	3	Lift/Carry	45 / 30
Edge Points	⬡⬡⬡⬡⬡⬡⬡	Movement	4 / 8 / +2

Physical Limit: 4 **Mental Limit:** 5 **Social Limit:** 5

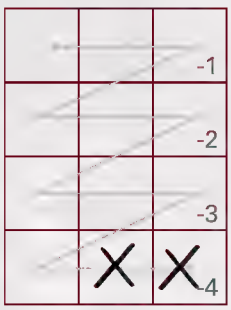
CONDITION MONITOR

Physical Damage Track



Characters have 8 + (Body ÷ 2, round up) boxes on the physical damage track, black out extra boxes.

Stun Damage Track



Characters have 8 + (Will ÷ 2, round up) boxes on the stun damage track; black out extra boxes

Overflow 3

For every 3 boxes of damage on any one damage track, the character takes a –1 Dice Pool modifier on tests; these modifiers are cumulative within and across damage tracks, see *Wound Modifiers*, p. 169.

SKILLS

Skill	RTG	Type	Skill	RTG	Type
English	N	L	Japanese	1	L
Automatics	2	A	Hardware	1	A
Compiling	4	A	Perception	2	A
Computer	3	A	E. Warfare	2	A
Cybercombat	2	A	Pistols	2	A
Hacking	5	A	Registering	4	A
Forgery	2	A	Software	2	A
BTL Dealers (Street)	2	K	Corporations (Street)	2	K
Matrix Security Measures (Interests)	2	K	Mr. Johnsons (Street)	1	K
			Deckers (Street)	2	K
Operating Systems (Interests)	2	K	Neo-Anarchists (Street)	1	K
			Fixers (Street)	1	K
Local Technomancers (Street)	2	K			

QUALITIES

Quality	Notes	Type
Analytical Mind	–5 Karma	P
Natural Hardening	–10 Karma	P
Resistance to Toxins	–4 Karma	P
Addiction (Moderate, BTLs)	+9 Karma	N
Dependents (live-in girlfriend)	+6 Karma	N
Prejudiced (Corporate Wageslaves)	+5 Karma	N

IDS / LIFESTYLES / CURRENCY

Primary Lifestyle Low (safehouse, 3 mths), Middle (5 mths)

Nuyen 7,195 **Licenses**

Fake IDs / Related Lifestyles / Funds / Licenses

10 fake SINs (rating 4), 10 fake licenses (gun license, rating 4)

CONTACTS

Name	Loyalty	Connection	Favor
Neo-A Lieutenant	2	2	—
Fence	1	1	—
Fixer	1	2	—

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SHADOWRUN®

CHARACTER Mega Pulse (Technomancer)
PLAYER James
NOTES

RANGED WEAPONS

Weapon	Dam	Acc	AP	Mode	RC	Ammo
EX Shocker	11S(e)	4	-5	SS	-	4 (m)
Ares Crusader II	7P	5	-	SS/BF	2	40 (c)
Black Scorpion	6P	5	—	SA/BF	(1)	35 (c)
HK-227	7P	5 (7)	—	SA/BF/FA	(1)	28 (c)
5 flash-bang grenades	10S	—	-4			Blast 10m radius

MELEE WEAPONS

Weapon	Reach	Dam	Acc	AP

ARMOR

Armor	Rating	Notes
armor clothing	6	
armor jacket	12	fire resistance 4

CYBERDECK

Model	Attack	Sleaze
Device Rating	Data Processing	Firewall
Programs		

Matrix Condition Monitor 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

AUGMENTATIONS

Augmentation	Rating	Notes	Essence

VEHICLE

Vehicle	Handling
Acceleration	Speed
Pilot	Body
Armor	Sensor
Notes	

GEAR

Ares Roadmaster, 2 concealable holsters, DocWagon contract (SuperPlatinum, 1 year), dream chips (5), earbuds [Capacity 3, audio enhancement 2, select sound filter 1], chameleon suit [9], Transys Avalon commlink w/ sim module, goggles [Capacity 6, w/ low-light vision, smartlink, flare compensation, image link], jammer (area, Rating 4), jammer (directional, Rating 6), 2 medkits (Rating 6, w/ 5 medkit supplies), mood chips (5), scanner [handheld, Capacity 2, w/ atmosphere sensor 3, cyberware scanner 3], 3 silencers, 6 spare clips, trodes

1,000 regular ammo rounds, 300 rounds APDS ammo, 100 taser darts, 500 explosive ammo rounds, 80 stick-n-shock rounds

SPELLS / PREPARATIONS RITUALS / COMPLEX FORMS

Complex Forms
- Cleaner
- Editor
- Resonance Spike

Sprites (3 tasks each)
- Crack Sprite 6
- Fault Sprite 6

ADEPT POWERS OR OTHER ABILITIES

Living Persona
- Attack: 5 Data Processing: 6
- Device Rating: 6
- Firewall: 5 (+1 w/ Nat. Hardening against Biofeedback
- Sleaze: 6

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SHADOWRUN®

CHARACTER The Hammer / Street Samurai
PLAYER Rob
NOTES racial bonuses: +1 armor therm vision, +1 reach

PERSONAL DATA

NAME/PRIMARY ALIAS Tyson Hughes "The Hammer"
Metatype Troll — Ethnicity
Age — Sex — Height — Weight
Street Cred 0 — Notoriety 0 — Public Awareness 0
Karma 0 — Total Karma — Misc

ATTRIBUTES

Body	9	Essence	4.9
Agility	4	Magic/Resonance	
Reaction	3 (5)	Initiative	6 (8) + 1D6
Strength	11	Matrix Initiative	
Willpower	4	Astral Initiative	
Logic	3	Composure	7
Intuition	3	Judge Intentions	6
Charisma	3	Memory	7
Edge	1	Lift/Carry	135 / 90
Edge Points		Movement	8 / 16 / +1

Physical Limit: 12 — Mental Limit: 5 — Social Limit: 5

SKILLS

Skill	RTG	Type	Skill	RTG	Type
English	N	L	Daggers	2	L
Athletics Skill Group	2	A	Longarms	3	A
Automatics	5	A	Perception	2	A
Beasts	4	A	Pilot Ground Craft	2	A
Computer	1	A	Pistols	2	A
First Aid	3	A	Throwing Weapons	2	A
Heavy Weapons	2	A	Unarmed Combat	5	A
Bismarck City Knowledge (Pros)	2	K	Runner Hangouts (Streets)	1	K
UCAS Military Regulations (Pro)	3	K	Sioux Nation (Pro)	2	K
Fixers (Street)	1	K	Street Clinics (Street)	2	K

CORE COMBAT INFO

Primary Armor: Armor Jacket (Body)
Primary Ranged Weapon: Ares Predator V

Dam	Acc	AP	Mode	RC	Ammo
8P	5 (9)	-1	SA	–	15 (c)

Primary Melee Weapon: Katana

Reach	Dam	Acc	AP
1	14 (15)P	9	-5

CONDITION MONITOR

Physical Damage Track — Stun Damage Track

Overflow 9 (10)

For every 3 boxes of damage on any one damage track, the character takes a -1 Dice Pool modifier on tests; these modifiers are cumulative within and across damage tracks, see *Wound Modifiers*, p. 168.

QUALITIES

Quality	Notes	Type
Exceptional Attribute (Strength)	-14 Karma	P
Quick Healer	-5 Karma	P
Will to Live (1 level)	-5 Karma	P
SINner (National)	+5 Karma	N
Bad Rep	+9 Karma	N
Gremlins (2 levels)	+8 Karma	N

IDS / LIFESTYLES / CURRENCY

Primary Lifestyle: Low (3 months)
Nuyen: 3,505 — Licenses
Fake IDs / Related Lifestyles / Funds / Licenses
1 fake gun license (Rating 4); 1 fake SIN (Rating 4)

CONTACTS

Name	Loyalty	Connection	Favor
Fixer	2	2	
Street Doc	2	3	

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SHADOWRUN®

CHARACTER The Hammer / Street Samurai
PLAYER Rob
NOTES

RANGED WEAPONS

Weapon	Dam	Acc	AP	Mode	RC	Ammo
Ares Predator V	8P	5 (9)	-1	SA	–	15 (c)
Colt Cobra TZ-120	8P	4 (5)	-	SA/BF/FA	2 (3)	32 (c)
FN HAR	10P	5 (6)	-2	SA/BF/FA	2	35 (c)
5 flash-bang grenades	10S	–	-4	Blast 10m radius		
3 high-explosive grenades	16P	–	-2	Blast -3m		

MELEE WEAPONS

Weapon	Reach	Dam	Acc	AP
Knucks	–	12 (13)P	12	
Katana	1	14 (15)P	9	-5

ARMOR

Armor	Rating	Notes
armor jacket	12	non-conductivity 4

CYBERDECK

Model — Attack — Sleaze
Device Rating — Data Processing — Firewall
Programs

Matrix Condition Monitor: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

AUGMENTATIONS

Augmentation	Rating	Notes	Essence
Bone lacing (plastic)			0.5
Reaction enhancers	2		0.6

VEHICLE

Vehicle — Handling
Acceleration — Speed
Pilot — Body
Armor — Sensor
Notes

GEAR

certified credstick (silver), contacts (Capacity 2, w: vision enhancement 2), explosive rounds (50 rounds), hollow points ammo (40 rounds), regular ammo (300 rounds), Renraku Sensei commlink, 9 spare clips

SPELLS / PREPARATIONS / RITUALS / COMPLEX FORMS

ADEPT POWERS OR OTHER ABILITIES

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SHADOWRUN®

CHARACTER Silver / Elf Mystic Adept
PLAYER Kyra
NOTES racial bonus: low-light vision

PERSONAL DATA

NAME/PRIMARY ALIAS Callin Moore / Silver
Metatype Elf — Ethnicity
Age — Sex — Height — Weight
Street Cred 0 — Notoriety 0 — Public Awareness 0
Karma 2 — Total Karma — Misc

ATTRIBUTES

Body	3	Essence	6
Agility	6	Magic/Resonance	6
Reaction	3	Initiative	9 + 1D6
Strength	2	Matrix Initiative	
Willpower	4	Astral Initiative	8 + 2D6
Logic	3	Composure	10
Intuition	4	Judge Intentions	10
Charisma	6	Memory	9
Edge	1	Lift/Carry	30 / 20
Edge Points		Movement	14, 28 / +2m

Physical Limit: 4 — Mental Limit: 5 — Social Limit: 8 (9)

SKILLS

Skill	RTG	Type	Skill	RTG	Type
English	N	L	Spellcasting	2	L
Spellcasting	5	A	Perception	3	A
Counterspelling	5	A	Con	4	A
Conjuring skill group	2	A	Locksmith	2	A
Automatics	4	A	Negotiation	4	A
Etiquette	3	A	Assensing	3	A
Pistols	3 (5)	A	Pilot Ground Craft	2	A
Computer	1	A	Fixers (Street)	1	K
Street Gang Identification (Street)	3	K	Street Gang Politics (Street)	3	K
Organized Crime (Street)	1	K	Law Enforcement Tactics (Street)	2	K
Street Drug Dealers (Street)	2	K			

CORE COMBAT INFO

Primary Armor: Armor Jacket (Body)
Primary Ranged Weapon: Browning Ultra Power

Dam	Acc	AP	Mode	RC	Ammo
8P	5 (6)	-1	SA	–	10 (c)

Primary Melee Weapon

Reach	Dam	Acc	AP

CONDITION MONITOR

Physical Damage Track — Stun Damage Track

Overflow 3

For every 3 boxes of damage on any one damage track, the character takes a -1 Dice Pool modifier on tests; these modifiers are cumulative within and across damage tracks, see *Wound Modifiers*, p. 168.

QUALITIES

Quality	Notes	Type
Focused Concentration 2	-8 Karma	P
Mentor Spirit (Sea)	-5 Karma	P
Adept Power Points (5)	-10 Karma	P
Code of Honor (after Dusk)	+10 Karma	N
Distinctive Style (Gang Tattoo)	+5 Karma	N
Addiction (Mild, Bass)	+4 Karma	N

IDS / LIFESTYLES / CURRENCY

Primary Lifestyle: Low (2 months)
Nuyen: 2,925 — Licenses
Fake IDs / Related Lifestyles / Funds / Licenses
fake driver's license (Rating 4), fake gun license (Rating 3)
fake magic license (Rating 3), fake SIN (Rating 3)

CONTACTS

Name	Loyalty	Connection	Favor
Ancients Lieutenant	3	3	–
Ancients Mentor	2	1	–
Drug Dealer	1	1	–
Talismonger	1	2	–
Street Doc	1	3	–

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SHADOWRUN®

CHARACTER Silver / Elf Mystic Adept
PLAYER Kyra
NOTES

RANGED WEAPONS

Weapon	Dam	Acc	AP	Mode	RC	Ammo
Ultra Power	8P	5 (6)	-1	SA	–	10 (c)
Slyer 1*M9	8P	4	-	SA/BF/FA	–	30 (c)
Uzi IV	8P	5 (6)*	-	BF	(1)	28 (c)

* modified by Character's Enhanced Accuracy adept power

MELEE WEAPONS

Weapon	Reach	Dam	Acc	AP

ARMOR

Armor	Rating	Notes
armor jacket	12	

CYBERDECK

Model — Attack — Sleaze
Device Rating — Data Processing — Firewall
Programs

Matrix Condition Monitor: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

AUGMENTATIONS

Augmentation	Rating	Notes	Essence

VEHICLE

Vehicle — Handling
Acceleration — Speed
Pilot — Body
Armor — Sensor
Notes

GEAR

autopicker (Rating 3), bliss (5 doses), certified credstick (silver), gel rounds (70), minewsiper, regular ammo (300 rounds), Renraku Sensei commlink, Yamaha Growler

SPELLS / PREPARATIONS / RITUALS / COMPLEX FORMS

Spells

Clout	Blast
Lightning Bolt	Stunball
Analyze Truth	Clairaudience
Influence	Mind Probe
Heal	Improved Invisibility

ADEPT POWERS OR OTHER ABILITIES

Enhanced Accuracy (Automatics)	.25
Improved Ability (Pistols)	.5
Improved Potential (Social)	.5
Mystic Armor (1 level)	.5
Voice Control (1 level)	.25
Water Spirit (3 services)	6 Force
Beast Spirit (3 services)	6 Force

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STREET SAMURAI

He's where he began: out on the streets and alleys. Growing up looking for an edge, he found a job, and then he found another. And he made every nuyen stretch. Then, piece by piece, he put in new implants until he reached his goal: street samurai. Not just any razor guy, but something more. Not some wise guy, or augmented thug or merc. He earned his honor by his work and learned from generations of noble warriors of old, giving him a soul, the spirit of *bushido*. Now he runs shadows with his team.

METATYPE: ORK

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG
7	6	5 (7)	5	3	2	3	3	0.68	1

Condition Monitor (P/S)	14 / 10
Armor	13
Limits	Physical 8 (9), Mental 4, Social 3
Physical Init	10 + 3D6
Active Skills	Automatics 5, Blades 5 (6), Longarms 3 (4), Pilot Ground 1, Pistols 4, Sneaking 2 (3), Unarmed Combat 2 (3)
Knowledge Skills	Great Restaurants 2, Law Enforcement 2, Poetry 1, Safe Houses 3
Languages	English N, Japanese 2
Qualities	Ambidextrous, Code of Honor (Bushido), Guts, Home Ground (Street Politics), Incompetent (Acting)
Augmentations	Cybereyes [Rating 3, flare compensation, low-light, smartlink, thermographic, vision enhancement 2, vision magnification], dermal plating 2 (alphaware), cyberarm [right, obvious, Strength 11, Agility 9, cyber sub-machine gun w/ external clip port], cyberarm [left, obvious, Strength 11, Agility 9, Armor 2, cyber spur, cyberarm slide], enhanced articulation, platelet factories, reflex recorder [Blades, Longarms, Sneaking, Unarmed Combat], synaptic booster 2, synthcardium 1
Vehicles	Harley-Davidson Scorpion [Handling 4/3, Speed 4, Accel 2, Body 8, Armor 9, Pilot 1, Sensor 2]
Gear	earbuds [audio enhancement (Rating 1), 4 fake SINs [Rating 4, each with fake licenses (Rating 4, concealed carry, possession of firearms, possession of augmentations)], spatial recognizer], Hermes Ikon commlink (Rating 5), jammer (area, Rating 4), lined coat [9, chemical protection 3, fire resistance 3, non-conductivity 3], medkit (Rating 3), medkit (Rating 6), micro-transceiver, Middle Lifestyle (3 months), 5 stim patches (Rating 6), 2 trauma patches, white noise generator (Rating 6)
Weapons	Katana [Blade, Reach 1, Acc 7, DV 14P, AP –3] Sword [Blade, Reach 1, Acc 6, DV 14P, AP –2] Ares Light Fire 75 [Light Pistol, Acc 6 (8), DV 6P, AP —, SA, RC —,16 (c),w/ 3 spare clips, 100 rounds regular ammo] Ares Predator V [Heavy Pistol, SA, Acc 5 (7), DV 8P, AP –5, RC —, Ammo 15 (c), APDS ammo (100 rounds) , 3 spare clips] HK-227 [SMG, Acc 5 (7), DV 8P, AP –1, SA/BF/FA, RC (1), 28 (c), w/ 3 spare clips, 100 rounds explosive ammo] FN HAR [Assault Rifle, Acc 5 (7), DV 10P, AP –6, SA/BF/FA, RC 2, 35 (c), w/ intergral smartlink, 3 spare clips, 100 rounds APDS ammo] Enfield AS-7 [Shotgun, Acc 4 (6), DV 15P(f), AP +4, SA/BF, RC —,10(c) or 24 (d), w/ internal smartlink, 3 spare clips, 100 rounds flechette ammo] Ingram Valiant [LMG, Acc 5 (7), DV 10P, AP –3, BF/FA, RC 2 (3), 50 (c) or 100 (belt), w/ integral smartlink, 3 spare clips, 100 rounds explosive ammo] 3 high explosive grenades [Grenade, non-aerodynamic, DV 16P, AP –2, Blast –2/m] Spurs (cyber) [Unarmed, Reach —, Acc 9, DV 14P, AP –2]
Contacts	Fixer (Connection 4, Loyalty 2)
Starting ¥	2,555 + (4D6 x 100)¥

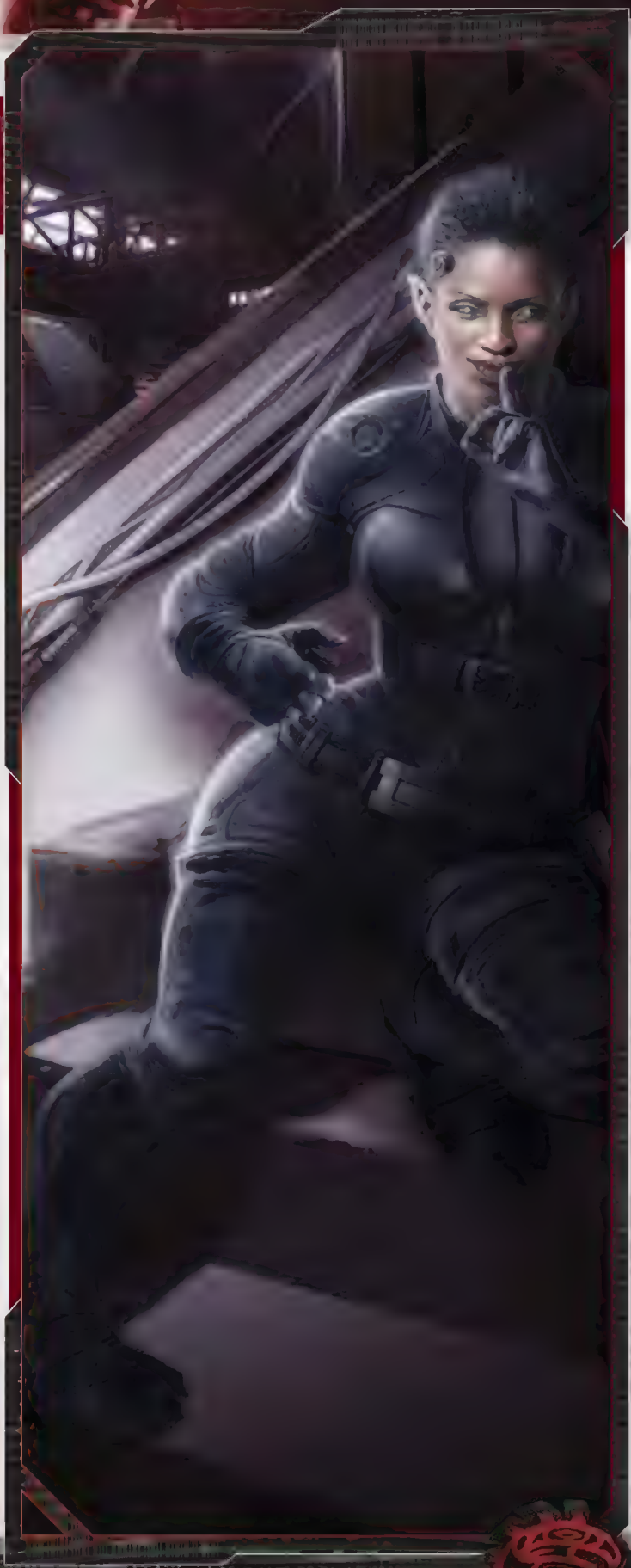
COVERT OPS SPECIALIST

The covert ops specialist aims to be a ghost in the world. She trains and equips herself to slide in and out of places without leaving a trace. Every security system has a weak point, an avenue of approach that was forgotten or that no one believed anyone would be able to exploit. The covert ops runner makes it her living to know these weaknesses and use them. She's fast, agile, and strong, meaning she can quickly adapt to any situation, avoiding noisy combats and leaving before anyone even knew she was there.

METATYPE: DWARF

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG
5	6	4	5	4	4	5	4	5.6	5

Condition Monitor (P/S)	10 / 10
Armor	9
Limits	Physical 7, Mental 6, Social 6
Physical Initiative	8 + 1D6
Active Skills	Computer 2, Escape Artist 3, Etiquette 3, Firearms skill group 2, Gymnastics 5, Hardware 2, Perception 3, Running 3, Sneaking 5, Swimming 2
Knowledge Skills	Building Layouts 4, Corporate Security Systems 5, Extreme Sports 2, Infiltration Techniques 3
Languages	English N, Japanese 4
Qualities	Catlike, Double Jointed, Natural Athlete
Augmentations	Cybereyes (Rating 2, w/ low-light, smartlink, thermographic, vision enhancement 1), datajack
Gear	Cellular glove molder (Rating 4), chameleon suit [w/ thermal damping (Rating 2)], climbing gear, crowbar, Erika Elite commlink (Device Rating 4), fake license (gun, Rating 4), fake SIN (Rating 4), grapple gun (with stealth rope 500m, catalyst stick, micro wire 200m), Low Lifestyle (3 months), maglock passkey (Rating 3), micro-transceiver, rappelling gloves, sequencer (Rating 4), tag eraser
Weapons	Streetline Special [Hold-out, Acc 4, DV 6P, AP —, SA, RC —, 6 (c), w/ spare clip, 60 rounds regular ammo] Ares Predator V [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5 (7), DV 7P, AP –4, SA, RC —, 15 (c), w/ silencer, smartlink, spare clip, 50 rounds regular ammo]
Contacts	Fixer (Connection 4, Loyalty 3) Corporate Security Contractor (Connection 3, Loyalty 5)
Starting ¥	270 + (3D6 x 60)¥



OCCULT INVESTIGATOR

She's the private dick you want on your side when the drek hitting the fan comes with an aura. She walks like an angel gliding on silk, talks like the only woman in the bar you want to meet. She's smooth, like a Manhattan: complicated under the surface, bittersweet with an old and formidable soul. She's got the conventional sources—a bartender, a detective, that sort of thing—but she also collects information from wandering spirits and shimmering auras. The strong would call her life adventurous, the weak would call it trouble. She just calls it business.

METATYPE: HUMAN

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG	M
3	3	4	3	5	3	6	5	6.0	3	4

Condition Monitor (P/S)	10 / 11
Armor	9
Limits	Physical 5, Mental 6, Social 7
Physical Init	10 + 1D6
Astral Init	12 + 2D6
Active Skills	Alchemy 5, Arcana 4 (+2), Banishing 4, Binding 3, Clubs 2, Counterspelling 4, Impersonation (Human) 3 (+2), Influence skill group 2, Perception 5, Summoning 5
Knowledge Skills	Magical Community (Seattle) 4 (+2), Magical Forensics 3, Police Procedures 3, Sprawl Dive Bars 3
Languages	English N, Spanish N, Sperethiel 4
Qualities	Addiction (alcohol, mild), Bad Luck, Bilingual, First Impression, Magician, Mentor Spirit (Snake), National SIN (Aztlan)
Vehicles	Chrysler-Nissan Jackrabbit [Handling 4/3, Speed 3, Accel 2, Body 8, Armor 4, Pilot 1, Sensor 2, Passengers 2]
Alchemical Preparations	Analyze Truth, Armor, Clairvoyance, Detect Individual, Flamethrower, Heal, Physical Barrier, Stealth
Gear	Alchemy focus (Force 4), counterspelling focus (Force 4, combat spells), fake license (Rating 4, private detective), fake SIN (Rating 4), lined coat [9], magical lodge materials (Force 5), Middle Lifestyle (2 months), Sony Emperor commlink [Device Rating 2]
Weapons	Staff [Club, Reach 2, Acc 6, DV 6P, AP —] Stun baton [Club, Reach 1, Acc 4, DV 9S(e), AP –5, 10 charges]
Contacts	Talismonger (Connection 3, Loyalty 2) Police detective (Connection 3, Loyalty 4) Bartender (Connection 1, Loyalty 2)
Starting ¥	1,250 + (4D6 x 100)¥

STREET SHAMAN

One who came into his magic late in life, the street shaman relies on the spirits of the land more than the medicine that Bear has taught him, well aware that his own magical power pales before that of the spirit world. He has long healed the people of his community, but he has decided that the time is right to share his knowledge. The sprawl has been sick from many cancers and, with Bear's strength, he will do his best to cure it.

METATYPE: ELF

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG	M
4	4	4	5	4	4	4	6	6.0	1	5

Condition Monitor (P/S)	10 / 10
Armor	9
Limits	Physical 6, Mental 6, Social 8
Physical Initiative	8 + 1D6
Astral Initiative	8 + 3D6
Active Skills	Alchemy 4, Animal Handling 2, Assessing 3, Athletics skill group 1, Banishing 2, Blades 3, Conjuring 6, Disguise 1, Etiquette 2, First Aid 4, Intimidation 2, Medicine 4, Navigation 1, Negotiation 2, Perception 1, Performance 2, Sneaking 1, Sorcery skill group 4, Survival 1, Throwing Weapons 1, Unarmed Combat 1
Knowledge Skills	Politics 2, Salish-Sidhe Nation 3, Sprawl Life4, Tarislar 4, Tir Tairngire 2
Languages	English N, Salish 2, Sperethiel N
Qualities	Bilingual, Gremlins (2), Mentor Spirit (Bear), Spirit Affinity (Beast spirits), Prejudice (Mild, against Hermetic magicians), Simsense Vertigo
Spells	Antidote, Cure Disease, Entertainment, Heal, Mana Bolt
Gear	Alchemy kit, biomonitor, fake SIN (Rating 3), fake license to practice magic (Rating 3), fake license to practice medicine (3), flashlight, lined coat [9], magical lodge (Rating 3), medkit (Rating 4, w/ 1 resupply), Renraku Sensei commlink, respirator (Rating 1), spell focus (Health), Squatter Lifestyle (2 months)
Weapons	Combat knife [Blade, Reach —, Acc 6, DV 7P, AP –3] Survival knife [Blade, Reach —, Acc 5, DV 7P, AP –1] Throwing knife [Throwing Weapon, Acc Physical, DV 6P, AP –1]
Contacts	Street ganger (Connection 2/Loyalty 3) Talismonger (Connection 2/Loyalty 3) Tanamous member (Connection 1/Loyalty 1) Tarislar politician (Connection 3/ Loyalty 3) Tribal bureaucrat Connection 2/ Loyalty 2)
Starting ¥	2D6 x 40¥

COMBAT MAGE

Magic has a lot of uses, from sneaking into places to manipulating people's minds to healing and strengthening other members of his team. But there's always magic that just blasts suckers in the face. This is the combat mage's strength. He's large, rough, and not subtle in the least, and he leaves scorched marks and bruised bodies in his wake. He's the reason opponents want to "geek the mage first," but it's going to take a lot more than a street proverb to bring him down.

METATYPE: HUMAN

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG	M
5	3	3	3	4	5	3	2	6.0	2	6

Condition Monitor (P/S)	11 / 10
Armor	13
Limits	Physical 5, Mental 6, Social 5
Physical Init	6 + 1D6
Active Skills	Assensing 3, Astral Combat 3, Banishing 3, Blades 2, Counterspelling 5, First Aid 3, Perception 3, Pistols 3, Spellcasting 5, Summoning 4
Knowledge Skills	Action Trids 3, Critters 3, Magic Theory 4, Urban Brawl 3
Languages	English N, Spanish 3
Qualities	Distinctive Style (Troll Poser), Focused Concentration 3, High Pain Tolerance 1, Magician, Prejudiced (Biased against elves)
Spells	Ball Lightning, Clout, Combat Sense, Flamethrower, Heal, Increase Agility, Increase Reflexes, Manaball, Physical Mask, Stunbolt
Gear	Armor jacket, contacts [Capacity 2, w/ vision enhancement 2], fake license (magic, Rating 2), fake SIN (Rating 2), Low Lifestyle (2 months)
Weapons	Colt America L36 [Light Pistol, Acc 7, DV 7P, AP —, SA, RC —, 11(c), w/ 75 rounds of regular ammo] Combat knife [Blade, Acc 6, Reach —, DV 7P, AP –3]
Contacts	[illegible]
Starting ¥	80 + (3D6 x 60)¥

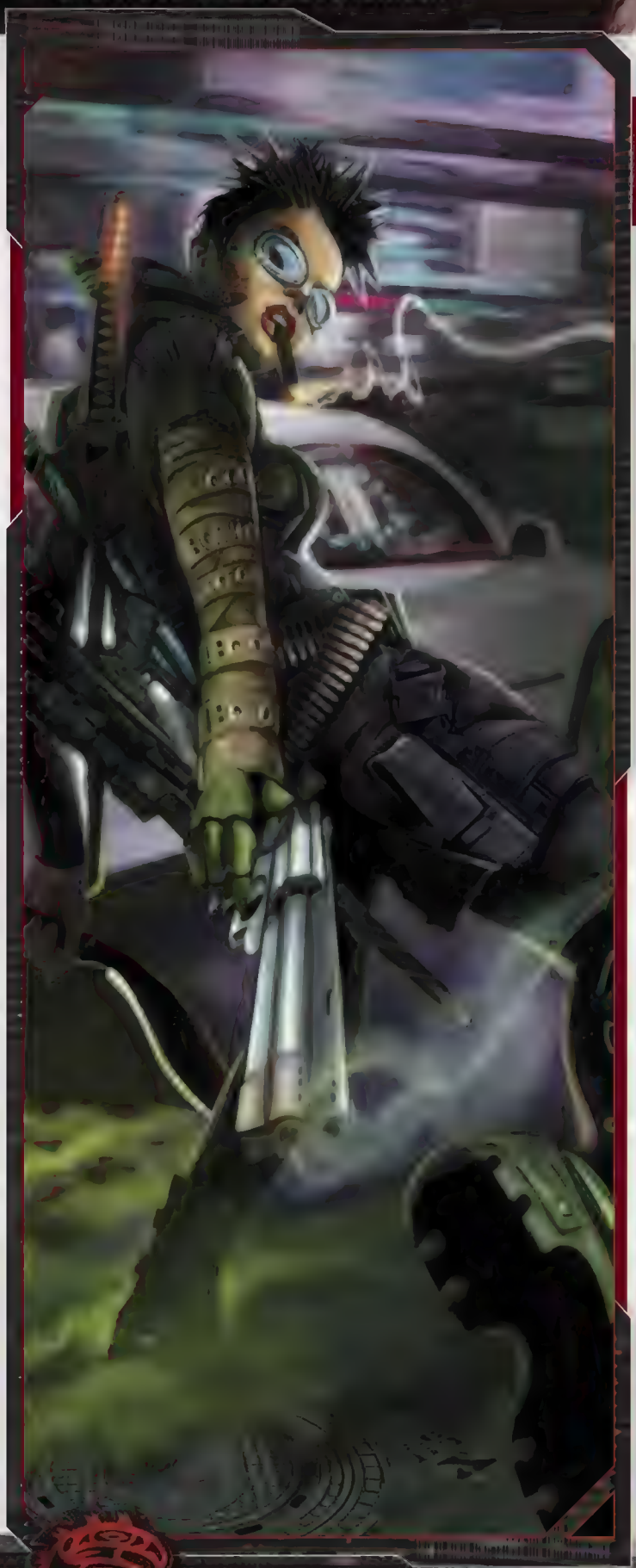
BRAWLING ADEPT

The brawling adept is an unstoppable typhoon of kicks and punches but is also a modern-day youxia, a wandering force that stands up for those who cannot defend themselves. In a youxia's eyes, it is the duty of the strong to protect the weak, not dominate them. The brawling adept puts her fists and force in the service of others, battling against those who oppress the common people. In the modern world, this most often pits her against the megacorporations, but corrupt government officials, criminal syndicates, and twisted spirits have all been known to draw her wrath as well, and her wrath is a force of nature.

METATYPE: HUMAN

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG	M
5	5	5(6)	5	3	3	3	3	6.0	4	5

Condition Monitor (P/S)	11 / 10
Armor	9
Limits	Physical 7, Mental 4, Social 5
Physical Initiative	8 (9) + 1(2)D6
Active Skills	Archery 4, Athletics skill group 4, Blades 4, Clubs 4, Computer 1, Con 1, Disguise 1, Escape Artist 3, Etiquette 2, First Aid 1, Intimidation 3, Lockpicking 2, Negotiation 1, Outdoors skill group 1, Perception 3, Sneaking 4, Throwing Weapons 3, Unarmed Combat 6
Knowledge Skills	Kung Fu 4, Seattle Parkour 4, Seattle Squats 2, Triads 2
Languages	English N, Mandarin N
Qualities	Bilingual, Code of Honor (Will only bring lethal force against those who first use it, protect the weak, overthrow the corrupt), Double Jointed, Natural Athlete, Pain Resistance (1)
Adept Powers	Critical Strike (Unarmed Combat) (2, 1 PP), Improved Ability (Unarmed Combat) (3, 1.5 PP), Improved Reflexes (1, 1.5 PP), Improved Senses (low-light vision, 0.25 PP), Killing Hands (0.5 PP), Light Body (1, 0.25 PP)
Gear	Climbing gear, fake SIN (1), flashlight, glasses (Rating 1, w/ image link), lockpicks, Meta Link commlink, respirator (Rating 1), Squatter Lifestyle (2 months), survival kit, Urban Explorer jumpsuit
Weapons	Bow (Rating 5) [Bow, Acc 6, DV 7P, AP –2, w/ 10 arrows (Rating 5)] Club [Club, Reach 1, Acc 4, DV 8P, AP —] Extendable baton [Club, Reach 1, Acc 5, DV 7P, AP —] Knives (2) [Blade, Reach —, Acc 5, DV 6P, AP –1] Survival knife [Blade, Reach —, Acc 5, DV 7P, AP –1] Throwing knives (2) [Throwing Weapon, Acc Physical, DV 6P, AP –1]
Contacts	Crusading reporter (2 connection, 3 loyalty) Street kid (1 connection, 3 loyalty) Triad member (3 connection, 2 loyalty)
Starting ¥	2D6 X 40¥



WEAPONS SPECIALIST

In a field of street scum, corporate runaways, and neo-anarchists who refuse to bend knee to "the man", the weapons specialist stands out as a true professional, a mercenary whose loyalty ends with a credstick and who takes nothing personal; a tour in a war-torn country burned away most of her idealism while forging her into an icon of death. The question isn't if she will succeed in killing her target, only how she'll do it. Pray this walking arsenal is never aimed at you.

METATYPE: HUMAN

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG
4	5	4	3	3	3	3	3	5.0	5

Condition Monitor (P/S)	11 / 9
Armor	9
Limits	Physical 5, Mental 4, Social 5
Physical Init	7 + 1D6
Active Skills	Archery 3, Armorer 3, Athletics skill group 3, Auto Mechanics 1, Automatics 4, Close Combat skill group 4, Computer 1, Demolitions 3, First Aid 1, Gunnery 3, Heavy Weapons 3, Influence skill group 3, Intimidation 4, Longarms 5, Navigation 1, Perception 3, Pilot Ground Craft 2, Pistols 5, Sneaking 3, Survival 2, Throwing Weapons 3
Knowledge Skills	Bogota 3, Catholicism 2, Military Procedures 4, Politics 3, Psychology 2, Sociology 2
Languages	Aztlaner Spanish 2, English N, Latin 1, Spanish N
Qualities	Addiction (Mild, to alcohol), Bilingual, Code of Honor (Civilians and noncombatants), Guts, High Pain Tolerance (1)
Augmentations	Obvious right cyberarm with custom Agility (5) and Strength (5)
Gear	armor vest (9), Armorer kit, climbing gear, earbuds [Capacity 1, w/ select sound filter 1], Erika Elite commlink, fake SIN [Rating 3, w/ fake licenses (concealed carry, gun, hunting, all Rating 3)], flashlight, gas mask, goggles [Capacity 4, w/ flare compensation, image link, low-light vision, smartgun link], grapple gun w/ 200m of standard rope, jammer (area, Rating 4), jazz (8 doses), kamikaze (1 dose), Low Lifestyle (1 month), medkit (Rating 3), two micro-tranceivers, respirator (Rating 1), smart firing platform, survival kit, Toyota Gopher
Weapons	Ares Alpha [Assault Rifle, Acc 5(7), DV 11P, AP –2, SA/BF/FA, RC 2, 42(c), w/ 4 spare clips, 420 rounds regular ammo, 200 rounds explosive ammo, 150 rounds Stick-n-Shock ammo Grenade launcher [Heavy Weapons, Acc 4(6), DV 16P, AP –2, w/ 30 high explosive microgrenades (included in stats)] Ares Crusader II [Machine Pistol, Acc 5, DV 7P, AP —, SA/BF, RC 2, 40(c), w/ silencer, 2 spare clips, 400 rounds regular ammo] Ares Desert Strike [Sniper Rifle, Acc 7, DV 14P, AP –5, SA, RC (1), 14(c), w/ bipod, 200 rounds explosive ammo (included in weapon stats)] Bow (Rating 3) [Bow, Acc 6, DV 5P, AP –1, w/ 20 arrows (Rating 3)] Combat knife [Blades, Reach —, Acc 6, DV 5P, AP –3] Defiance EX Shocker [Taser, Acc 4, DV 9S(e), AP –5, Sa, RC —, 4(m), w/ 20 taser darts] Enfield AS-7 [Shotgun, Acc 4(5), DV 13P, AP –1, SA/BF, RC —, w/ 4 spare clips, 200 rounds regular ammo, 100 rounds gel ammo, 200 rounds Stick-n-Shock ammo] Extendable baton [Clubs, Reach 1, Acc 5, DV 5S, AP —] Fichetti Security 600 [Light Pistols, Acc 6(7), DV 7P, AP —, SA, RC (1), 30(c), w/ concealed holster, 300 rounds regular ammo] High-explosive grenades (4) [Grenade, DV 16P, AP –2, Blast –2/m] HK 227 [SMG, Acc 5(7), DV 7P, AP —, SA/BF/FA, RC (1), 28(c), w/ 2 spare clips, 280 rounds regular ammo] Ingram Valiant [LMG, Acc 5(6), DV 9P, AP –2, BF/FA, RC 2(3), 50(c), w/ belt of 200 rounds regular ammo] Katana (2) [Blades, Reach 1, Acc 7, DV 6P, AP –3] Ruger Super Warhawk [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5, DV 9P, AP –2, SS, RC —, 6(cy), w/ quick draw holster, 4 speed loaders, 60 rounds regular ammo, 50 rounds explosive ammo] Shuriken (2) [Throwing Weapons, Acc 4, DV 4P, AP –1] Survival knife [Blades, Reach —, Acc 5, DV 5P, AP-1] Thermal smoke grenades (4) [Grenade, DV —, AP —, Blast 10m Radius]
Contacts	Arms dealer (Connection 2/Loyalty 3) Bartender (Connection 2/Loyalty 3) Fixer (Connection 2/Loyalty 2) Mr. Johnson (Connection 4/Loyalty 2)
Starting ¥	4,800 + (4D6 x 100)¥

FACE

One time, when he was a child living in a burned-out apartment, whoever happened to be acting as an authority figure for the face told him to use his words instead of hitting. Unlike almost every other child, the face took this advice to heart. Whether he's squeezing a few extra nuyen out of Mr. Johnson, convincing an ork security guard to let him past, or persuading the middle manager to leave his job for greener grass at some other corp, the face knows how to use his words and is a charmer and a persuader first and foremost. He also knows, though, that words sometimes fail, so for good measure he carries a few well-hidden guns. He may not have quite as deadly aim with them as he does with words, but he's still deadly enough.

METATYPE: ELF

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG
3	4	3	3	4	4	4	3	6.0	4

Condition Monitor (P/S)	10 / 10
Armor	8
Limits	Physical 4, Mental 6, Social 8
Physical Init	7 + 1D6
Active Skills	Acting skill group 4, Blades 2, Electronics skill group 4, Clubs 4, Electronic Warfare 4, Etiquette 5, First Aid 1, Forgery 4, Intimidation 4, Leadership 4, Locksmith 4, Negotiation 5, Perception 4, Pilot Ground Craft 1, Pistols 4, Stealth skill group 2, Unarmed Combat 2
Knowledge Skills	Business 4, High Fashion 4, Sports 4
Languages	Cantonese N, English N Japanese 4
Qualities	Addiction (Mild, alcohol), Bilingual, First Impression
Gear	Actioneer Business Clothes [8], bug scanner, data tap, earbuds [Rating 1, w/ select sound filter 1], electrochromatic T-shirt, fake concealed carry permit (Rating 4), fake gun license (Rating 4), fake SIN (Rating 4), flashlight, Ford Americar, glasses [Rating 1, w/ image link], Hardware kit, Hermes Ikon commlink, jammer (area, Rating 4), keycard copier (Rating 6), lockpick set, medkit (Rating 3), micro camera (Rating 1, w/ low-light vision], 2 micro-transceivers, respirator (Rating 1), sequencer (Rating 4), shopsoft (clothing), 20 stealth tags, suit (worth 1,000¥), tag eraser, white noise generator (Rating 6)
Weapons	Browning Ultra Power [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5(6), DV 8P, AP –1, SA, RC —, 10(c), w/ silencer, 2 spare clips, 100 rounds of regular ammunition] Colt America L36 [Light Pistol, Acc 7, DV 7P, AP —, SA, RC —, 11(c), w/ concealed holster, 2 spare clips, 110 rounds regular ammo] Extendable baton [Club, Reach 1, Acc 5, DV 4S, AP —] Knife [Blade, Acc 5, Reach —, DV 3P, AP –1] 2 smoke grenades [Grenade, DV —, AP —, Blast 10m Radius] Walther Palm Pistol [Hold-out, Acc 4, DV 7P, AP —, SS/BF, RC —, 2(b), w/ concealed holster, 10 rounds regular ammo] Yamaha Pulsar [Taser, Acc 5, DV 7S(e), AP –5, SA, RC —, 4(m), w/ 40 darts]
Contacts	City official (Connection 3/Loyalty 2) Club owner (Connection 2/Loyalty 2) Fixer (Connection 3/Loyalty 2) Media producer (Connection 2/Loyalty 3) Mr. Johnson (Connection 4/Loyalty 1) Street ganger (Connection 2/Loyalty 2) Ticket scalper (Connection 1/Loyalty 1)
Notes	Natural low light vision
Starting ¥	600 + (4D6 x 100)¥

TANK

Imagine how tough a person has to be to survive in the Sixth World without the comforts of technology or modern living—then augment that person for life on the streets. She comes from a tribe that values the ability to survive, even alone in the wilderness, but that wasn't challenge enough for her. She moved into the plascrete jungles of the Sprawl and found the shadows there to her liking. She's gotten her team out of more than one scrape on pure tenacity, and when the drek really hits the fan she can dish out the grief. On her tribe's lands, she was a tough, dependable woman, but in the shadows she is a walking tank.

METATYPE: TROLL

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG
10 (12)	2	3 (5)	7	3	2	3	2	1.56	1

Condition Monitor (P/S)	13 / 10
Armor	19 (25)
Limits	Physical 9 (11), Mental 4, Social 3
Physical Init	6 (8) + 1 (3) D6
Active Skills	Animal Handling 2, Archery 5, Pistols 6, Running 3, Survival 2, Unarmed Combat 4
Knowledge Skills	Leatherworking 3, Hunting 2, Tribal Culture (Salish) 2 (+2)
Languages	Salish N, English 2
Qualities	Allergy (seafood, moderate), High Pain Tolerance (Rating 2), Toughness
Augmentations	Aluminum bone lacing, cybereyes [Rating 2, flare compensation, low-light, smartlink, thermographic], dermal plating (Rating 2), skilljack (Rating 3), skillwires (Rating 3), synaptic booster (Rating 2)
Gear	Armor jacket [Armor 12, chemical protection (Rating 3), fire resistance (Rating 3), non-conductivity (Rating 3)], Transys Avalon commlink (Device Rating 6, sim module), subvocal microphone, helmet [Armor +2, trodes], ballistic shield [Armor +6], Throwing activesoft (Rating 3), Blades activesoft (Rating 3), Sneaking activesoft (Rating 3), English linguasoft (Rating 3), fake SIN (Rating 4), 100 rounds APDS heavy pistol ammunition, 100 rounds explosive ammunition, 3 spare clips, 3 speed loaders, 40 arrows (Rating 7), 50 taser darts, Low lifestyle (3 months pre-paid)
Weapons	Bow [Rating 7, SS, Acc 6, DV 9P, AP –3] Ares Predator V [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5 (7), DV 8P, AP –5, SA, RC —,15 (c), w/ APDS ammo] Ruger Super Warhawk [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5 (7), DV 10P, AP –3, SS, RC —, 6 (cy), w/ explosive ammo, integral smartlink] Defiance EX Shocker [Taser, Acc 4, DV 11S(e), SS, AP –5, 4 (m)] Combat axe [Blade, Acc 4, Reach 2, DV 12P, AP –4] Combat knife [Blade, Acc 6, Reach —, DV 9P, AP –3] 3 frag grenades [non-aerodynamic, DV 18P(f), AP +5, Blast –1/m] 3 thermal smoke grenades [non-aerodynamic, DV —, AP —, Blast 10 m radius]
Contacts	Tribal leader (Connection 3/Loyalty 3)
Starting ¥	3,915¥ + (3D6 x 60¥)

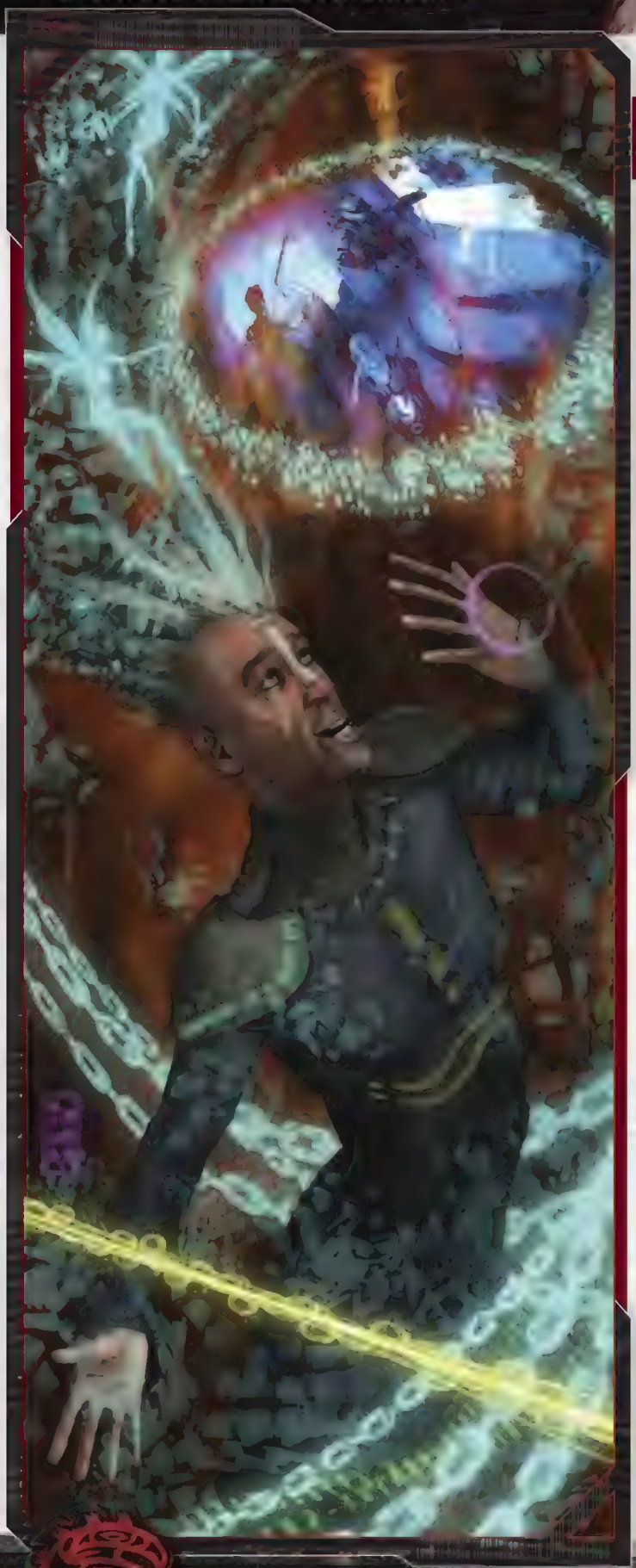
DECKER

The decker moves through the digital world, a Sixth World Boudicca who strikes hard and vanishes before the G-men show up. A code poet among programmers, she moves at the speed of thought in the Matrix, taking control of the devices that stand between her team and their objective. When the lead starts flying, she destroys her enemies' weapons and equipment, leaving them helpless. In the physical realm she is a wizard of engineering, building and hacking her way through the team's technical problems and tuning their gear to perfection.

METATYPE: DWARF

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG
3	2	2	3	5	5 (6)	4	2	5.1	2

Condition Monitor (P/S)	10 / 11
Armor	12
Limits	Physical 4, Mental 7, Social 5
Physical Init	7 + 1D6
Active Skills	Automatics 4, Cybercombat 6, Electronic Warfare 6, Electronics skill group 6, Engineering skill group 4, Etiquette 4, First Aid 3, Hacking (Hack on the Fly) 7 (+2), Lockpicking 4, Pilot Aircraft 3, Pilot Ground 3, Pistols 4, Unarmed Combat 3
Knowledge Skills	Cannibalizing Hardware 5, Detective Novels 3, Matrix Security (Emerald City Grid) 4 (+2)
Languages	English N, Japanese 3, Salish 3
Qualities	Allergy (Sunlight, Mild), Analytical Mind, Aptitude (Hacking), Code of Honor (Metahumans), Code Slinger (Brute Force)
Augmentations	Cerebral booster (Rating 1), cybereyes (Rating 1, w/ low-light, thermographic), datajack, skilljack (Rating 2), sleep regulator
Gear	Armor jacket [12], Corporate Security Procedures knowsoft (Rating 2), DocWagon Basic contract, Hermes Chariot cyberdeck [Device Rating 2, Atts 5 4 4 2, Programs 2], lockpick set, Meta Link commlink (Device Rating 1), medkit (Rating 6), Middle Lifestyle (2 months), programs (Armor, Biofeedback Filter, Edit, Encryption, Hammer, Signal Scrub, Toolbox), Sperethiel linguasoft (Rating 2), Vehicle Schematics skillsoft (Rating 2)
Weapons	Ceska Black Scorpion [Machine Pistol, Acc 5, DV 6P, AP —, SA/BF, RC (1), 35 (c), w/ 90 rounds regular ammo] Remington Roomsweeper [Heavy Pistol, Acc 4, DV 7P, AP –1, SA, RC —, 8 (m), w/ 30 rounds regular ammo]
Contacts	Corporate Janitor (Connection 1, Loyalty 2) Wizgang Leader (Connection 2, Loyalty 1)
Starting ¥	11 × (4D6 x 100)¥



TECHNOMANCER

It started when he was twelve and he saw a sports car going into a garage in a subdivision near where his wageslave parents worked. The door closed, removing the sports car from his view, and he thought *I want that to stay open*, and it did. Then he started seeing things, colorful waves of data flowing all around him, mesmerizing him. His parents knew something was wrong with him, and when they found out what it was, they put him on the street. That was mostly for his own protection, as they knew what their corporation did to people who manifested those sorts of abilities. They left their child to fend for himself, and he did, discovering that his contact with living data had value on the street. He still bends electronic objects and data to his will, but now, when he opens a door, he's more likely to take out whatever he found inside.

METATYPE: HUMAN

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG	R
2	3	3	3	5	5	6	4	6.0	3	5

Condition Monitor (P/S)	10 / 11
Armor	9
Limits	Physical 4, Mental 7, Social 6
Physical Init	8 + 1D6
Matrix Init	10 + 3D6
Active Skills	Athletics skill group 1, Influence skill group 4, Compiling 3, Computer 4, Cybercombat 4, Decompiling 2, Electronic Warfare 6, First Aid 1, Hacking 4, Hardware 2, Navigation 1, Pilot Aircraft 1, Pilot Ground Craft 1, Pilot Watercraft 1, Pistols 2, Sneaking 2, Software 4
Knowledge Skills	Business (Finance) 4 (+2), Club Music (Classic Dubstep) 2 (+2), Economics 4, NeoNET 4, Sports (Baseball) 2 (+2), Street Life 1
Languages	English N, German 2
Qualities	Analytical Mind, Codeslinger (Snoop), Home Ground (Digital turf [NeoNET]), Combat Paralysis, Insomnia, Prejudice (Vocal, against NeoNET citizens)
Complex Forms	Cleaner, Data Mask, Editor, Pulse Storm, Resonance Spike
Gear	Armor vest [9], 50 datachips (blank), data tap, earbuds [Rating 1, w/ select sound filter 1], fake SIN (Rating 3), flashlight, glasses [Rating 1, w/ image link], headjammer (Rating 6), mapsoft (Seattle), MCT Fly Spy microdrone, medkit (Rating 3), 2 Renraku Kanmushi microdrones, Renraku Sensei commlink, 10 restraints (plastic), respirator (Rating 1), 50 RFID tags, 30 stealth tags, Low Lifestyle (2 months)
Weapons	Colt America L36 [Light Pistol, Acc 7, DV 7P, AP —, SA, RC —, 11(c), w/ spare clip, 110 rounds regular ammo] Knife [Blade, Reach —, Acc 5, DV 4P, AP –1]
Contacts	Blogger (Connection 2/Loyalty 3) BTL dealer (Connection 1/Loyalty 1) Technomancer (Connection 2/Loyalty 3)
Starting ¥	3D6 x 60¥

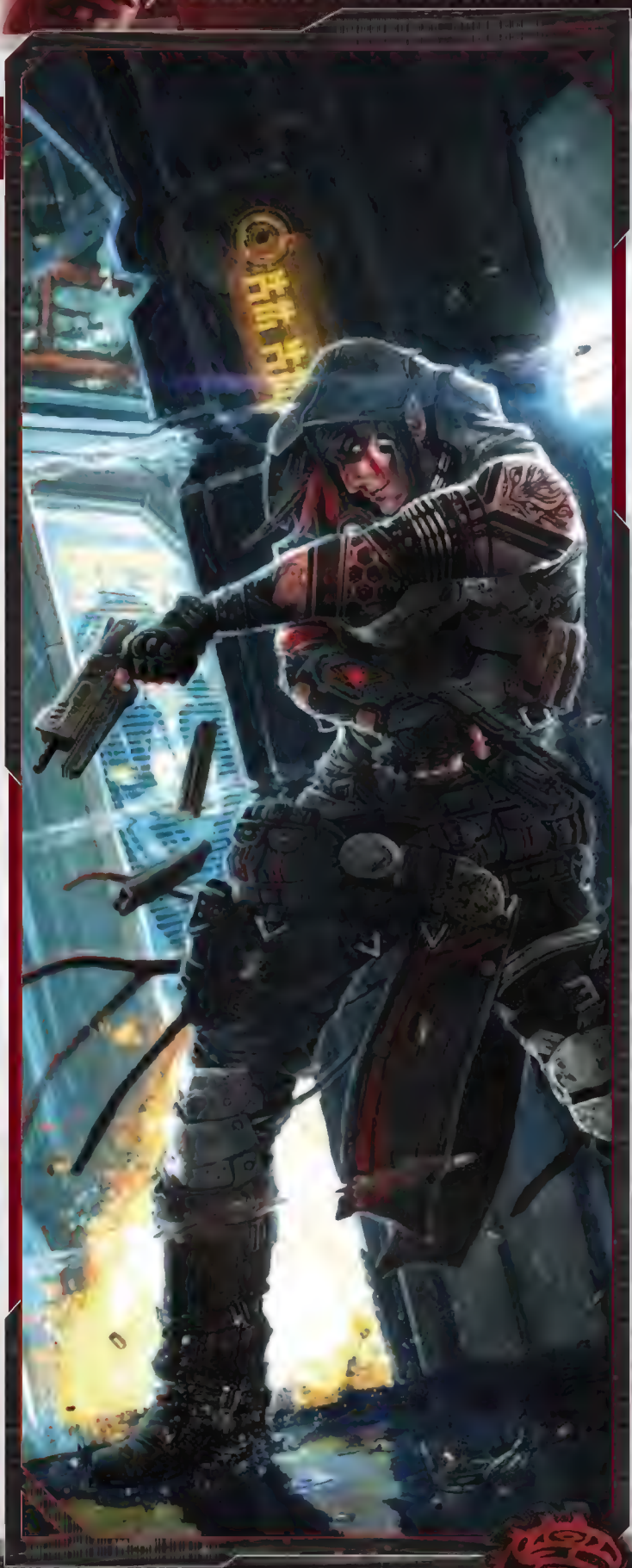
GUNSLINGER ADEPT

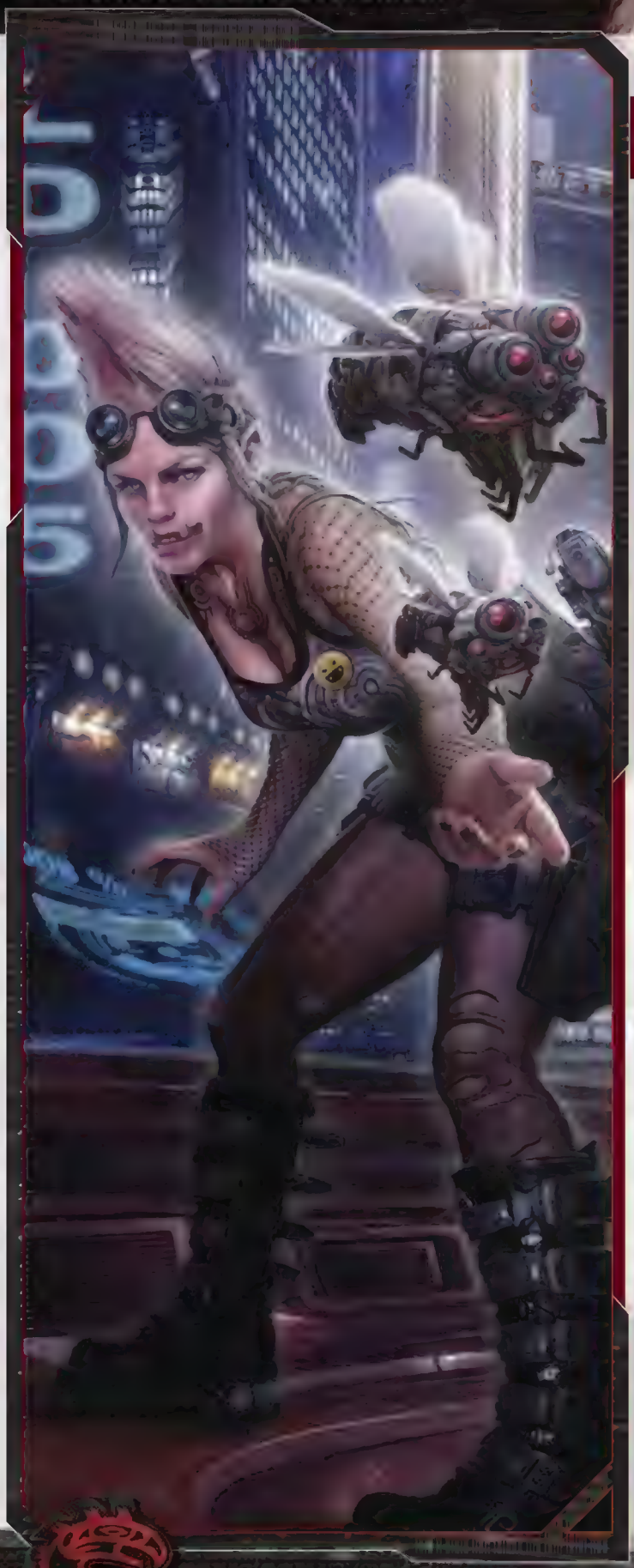
It started when the adept was a kid, and he shot a devil rat off a roof ledge with a BB gun from 300 meters. With a battered gun he found behind a dumpster. The amount of time people repeated the story let him know it was something special, so he dedicated himself to honing his skills, making himself deadlier with each day. People started offering him all sorts of money to use his skills, and he could have left a long path of bodies behind him. He decided, though, that powers like his had to be used carefully, so he developed a code to put boundaries around when he lets his abilities loose. When he does, though, make sure you're either on his side or very far away. If you are his target, his bullets will find you.

METATYPE: ELF

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG	M
3	4	3 (5)	2	2	2	3	3	6.0	5	4

Condition Monitor (P/S)	10 / 9
Armor	14
Limits	Physical 4, Mental 3, Social 5
Physical Init	6(8) + 3D6
Active Skills	Blades 4, Con 3, Firearms skill group 5, First Aid 3, Gymnastics 5, Perception 4, Pilot Ground Craft 3, Running 4, Sneaking (Urban) 4 (+2), Swimming 2, Tracking 3
Knowledge Skills	Egyptian Ceramics 2, Weapon Manufacturers 4
Languages	English 5, Lakota N, Sperethiel 4
Qualities	Adept, Addiction (Mild, BTLs), Code of Honor (Assassin's Creed), Guts, Natural Athlete
Adept Power	Attribute Boost (Agility) (4, 1 PP), Combat Sense (1, 0.5 PP), Enhanced Accuracy (Pistols, Automatics) (2, 0.5 PP), Improved Reflexes (2, 2.5 PP), Mystic Armor (2, 1 PP), Spell Resistance (1, 0.5 PP)
Gear	Armor jacket [12, chemical protection 3, fire resistance 3, non-conductivity 4], contacts [Capacity 3, w/ smartlink, vision enhancement 2], DocWagon contract (Platinum, 1 year) earbuds [Capacity 3, w/ audio enhancement 1, spatial recognizer], 2 fake SINs (Rating 5, w/ 5 Rating 5 fake gun licenses) gecko tape gloves, Hyundai Shin-Hyung, maglock passkey (Rating 3), Low Lifestyle (1 month), medkit (Rating 4, w/ 2 re-supplies), Renraku Sensei commlink (Device Rating 3), 2 trauma patches
Weapons	Ares Predator V (2) [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5(7), DV 8P, AP –1, SA, RC —, 15(c), w/ smartlink, 100 rounds regular ammo, 100 rounds Stick-n-Shock ammo] Ingram Smartgun X [SMG, Acc 4(6), DV 8P, AP —, BF/FA, RC 2, 32(c), w/ gas-vent 2, integral sound suppressor, smartlink, 100 rounds regular ammo, 100 rounds explosive ammo] Knife [Blade, Acc 5, Reach 1, DV 3P, AP –1] PJSS Model 55 [Shotgun, Acc 6, DV 11P, AP –1, SS, RC (1), 2(b), w/ integrated shock pad, 100 rounds regular ammo, 100 rounds explosive ammo] Ruger Super Warhawk [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5, DV 9P, AP –2, SS, RC —, 6(cy), w/ 100 rounds regular ammo Steyr TMP [Machine Pistol, Acc 5, DV 7P, AP —, SA/BF/FA, RC —, 30(c), w/ laser sight, 100 rounds regular ammo, 100 rounds explosive ammo, 100 rounds Stick-n-Shock ammo] Yamaha Raiden [Assault Rifle, Acc 6(8), DV 11P, AP –2, BF/FA, RC 1, 60(b), w/ integral sound suppressor, smartlink, 100 rounds regular ammo, 100 rounds explosive ammo]
Contacts	Black market gun dealer (Connection 3/Loyalty 3) Target range operator (Connection 3/Loyalty 2)
Starting ¥	1,690 + (3D6 x 60)¥





DRONE RIGGER

The drone rigger is the master of remote-piloted vehicles. She has a large stable of drones to call upon for almost any need from surveillance, to intrusion, defense, and front-line combat. She can pilot any kind of vehicle that rolls, walks, or flies with incredible skill, projecting her mind into the machines to accomplish amazing feats. When not experiencing life as a tiny bug, or an armored combat machine, she is fixing or upgrading her vehicles. They are her family—occasionally tough to deal with, but always there when she needs them.

METATYPE: ORK

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG
4	3	5 (7)	3	4	5	2	2	3.2	2

Condition Monitor (P/S)	10 / 10
Armor	9
Limits	Physical 5 (6), Mental 6, Social 4
Physical Init	7 + 1D6
Matrix Init	8 + 3D6 (hot-sim 8 + 4D6)
Active Skills	Armorer 5, Electronics skill group 2, Engineering skill group 3, Etiquette 3, Gunnery 5, Perception 3, Pilot Aircraft 6, Pilot Ground Craft 6, Pilot Walker 5, Pistols 3
Knowledge Skills	Automotive Mechanics 5, Drone Designs 2, Vehicle Chop Shops 4
Languages	English N, Or'zet 3
Qualities	Jurynigger
Augmentations	Commlink [Transys Avalon (Device Rating 6) w/ hot-sim module], control rig 2, reaction enhancers 2
Vehicles	Aztechnology Crawler [Walker Drone, Handling 4, Speed 3, Accel 1, Body 3, Armor 3, Pilot 3, Sensor 3] Cyberspace Designs Dalmatian [VTOL Drone, Handling 5, Speed 4, Accel 3, Body 5, Armor 5, Pilot 3, Sensor 3] GM-Nissan Doberman [Tracked Drone, Handling 5, Speed 3, Accel 1, Body 4, Armor 4, Pilot 3, Sensor 3, weapon mount (AK-97)] Lockheed Optic-X2 [VSTOL Drone, Handling 4, Speed 4, Accel 3, Body 2, Armor 2, Pilot 3, Sensor 3] 2x MCT Fly-Spy [Aerial Drone, Handling 4, Speed 3, Accel 2, Body 1, Armor 0, Pilot 3, Sensor 3] MCT-Nissan Roto-Drone [Rotary Drone, Handling 4, Speed 4, Accel 2, Body 4, Armor 4, Pilot 3, Sensor 3, weapon mount (Yamaha Raiden)] MCT-Nissan Roto-Drone [Rotary Drone, Handling 4, Speed 4, Accel 2, Body 4, Armor 4, Pilot 3, Sensor 3, weapon mount (Yamaha Pulsar)] Rover Model 2072 [SUV, Handling 5/5, Speed 4, Accel 2, Body 15, Armor 12, Pilot 2, Sensor 4, Passengers 6, rigger interface, weapon mount (Ares Alpha)] 2x Shiawase Kammushi [Walker Drone, Handling 4, Speed 2, Accel 1, Body 0, Armor 0, Pilot 3, Sensor 3] Steel Lynx [Wheeled Drone, Handling 5, Speed 4, Accel 2, Body 6, Armor 12, Pilot 3, Sensor 3, heavy weapon mount (Stoner-Ares M202)]
Gear	Aeronautic mechanic kit, armor vest [9], armorer shop, automotive mechanic facility, DocWagon contract (Gold, 1 year), fake licenses (gun, drone, all Rating 4), fake SIN (Rating 4), goggles (Capacity 4, w/ image link, smartlink, thermographic vision, vision magnification), Medium Lifestyle [3 months, w/ Special Work Area (Vehicle Facility), Obscure], minwelder
Weapons	Ares Predator V [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5 (7), DV 7P, AP –1, SA, RC —,15 (c), w/ 75 rounds regular ammo]w **GM-Nissan Doberman:** AK-97 [Assault Rifle, Acc 5, DV 10P, AP –6, SA/BF/FA, RC –, 38 (c), w/ 100 rounds APDS ammo] **MCT-Nissan Rotodrone 1:** Ares Alpha [Assault Rifle, Acc 5 (7), DV 10P, AP –2, SA/BF/FA, RC 2, 42 (c), w/ 250 rounds regular ammo] Ares Alpha grenade launcher [Grenade Launcher, Acc 4 (6), DV 16P, AP —2, SS, RC —,6 (c), w/ 12 high-explosive minigrenades] **MCT-Nissan Rotodrone 2:** Yamaha Pulsar [Taser, Acc 5, DV 7S(e), AP –5, SA, RC —, 4 (m)] **Rover Model 2072:** Ares Alpha [Assault Rifle, Acc 5 (7), DV 10P, AP –2, SA/BF/FA, RC 2, 42 (c), w/ 250 rounds regular ammo] Ares Alpha grenade launcher [Grenade Launcher, SS, Acc 4 (6), DV —, AP —, RC —,6 (c), w/ 12 thermal smoke minigrenades] **Steel Lynx:** Stoner-Ares M202 [MMG, Acc 5 (7), DV 11P, AP –4, FA, RC —, 100 (belt), w/ 150 rounds explosive ammo]
Contacts	Barrens mechanic (Connection 2/Loyalty 3) Drone dealer (Connection 3/Loyalty 3)
Starting ¥	1,150 + (4D6 x 100)¥

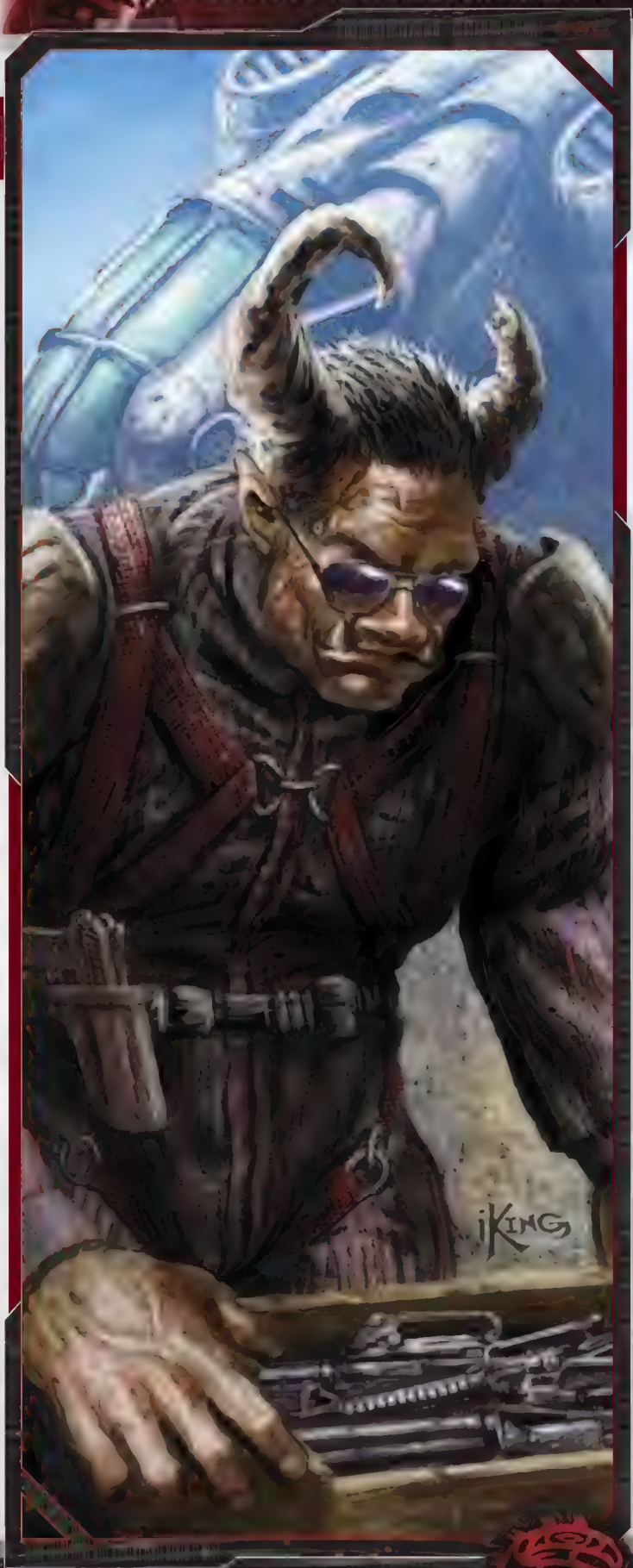
SMUGGLER

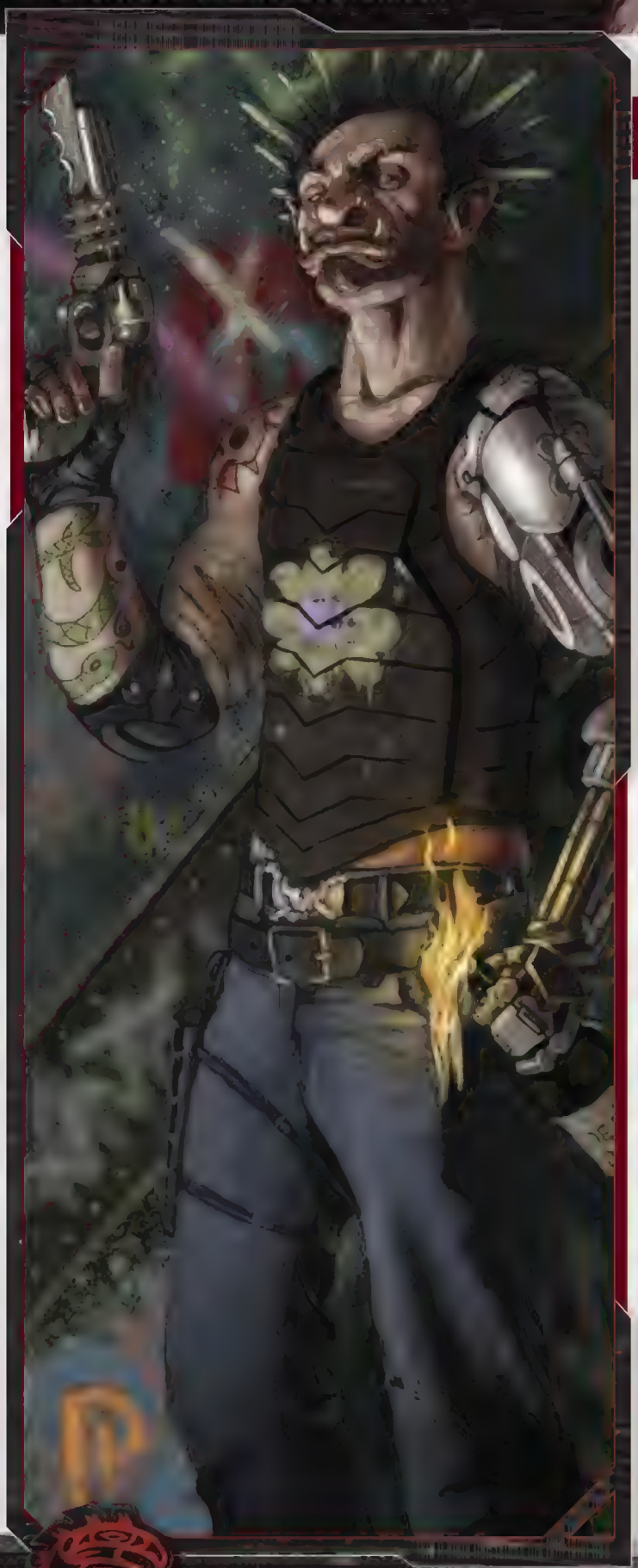
The smuggler knows the ins and outs of the Sprawl—literally. He can go where others can't, not because he's welcome, but because he dares. Master of land, sea, and air, the smuggler is a wheelman without equal. While he prefers his work to be quiet, when the big guns come out he can match the biggest on the street, and back it up with a menace that can only come from the blurred boundary between man and machine.

METATYPE: TROLL

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG
5	1(4)	5	5	3	2	5	4	4.9	1

Condition Monitor (P/S)	11 / 10
Armor	13
Limits	Physical 7, Mental 4, Social 6
Physical Init	10 + 1D6
Matrix Init	+ Data Processing + (2D6 or 3D6)
Active Skills	Electronic Warfare 2, Etiquette 2, Gunnery 5, Navigation 1, Negotiation 3, Pilot Aircraft 5, Pilot Ground Craft 6, Pilot Watercraft 2, Pistols 3
Knowledge Skills	Backstreets 3, Sci-Fi Flicks 2, Seattle Waterways 1, Smuggling Routes 4
Languages	English N, Salish 2
Qualities	Allergy (sunlight, moderate), Gearhead, Natural Hardening
Augmentations	Control rig (Rating 2), datajack, muscle toner 2, smartlink, smuggling compartment
Vehicles	Harley-Davidson Scorpion [Handling 4 / 3, Speed 4, Accel 2, Body 8, Armor 9, Pilot 1, Sensor 2, Passengers 1, rigger interface, 2 standard weapon mounts (Ares Alpha, Enfield AS-7)] Northrup Wasp [Handling 5, Speed 5, Accel 3, Body 10, Armor 8, Pilot 3, Sensor 3, Passengers 1, rigger interface, heavy weapon mount (Stoner-Ares M202)] GMC Bulldog [Handling 3, Speed 3, Accel 1, Body 16, Armor 12, Pilot 1, Sensor 2, Passengers 6, rigger interface] Gear: Armor jacket [12], DocWagon Platinum contract (1 year), medkit (Rating 6), Middle Lifestyle w/ attached three-car **Harley-Davidson Scorpion:** Ares Alpha [Assault Rifle, Acc 5 (7), DV 11P, AP –6, SA/BF/FA, RC 2, 42 (c), w/ 100 rounds APDS ammo, grenade launcher] Ares Alpha grenade launcher [Grenade Launcher, Acc 4 (6), DV 18P(f), AP +5, SS, RC —, 6 (c), fragmentation (30 minigrenades)] Enfield AS-7 [Shotgun, Acc 4 (6), DV 14P, AP –2, SA/BF, RC —,10 (c) or 24 (d), w/ smartlink, 100 rounds explosive ammo] **Wasp:** Stoner-Ares M202 [MMG, Acc 5 (7), DV 10P, AP –3, FA, RC —,50 (c) or 100 (belt), w/ smartlink, 500 rounds explosive ammo]
Gear	Armor jacket [12], DocWagon Platinum contract (1 year), medkit (Rating 6), Middle Lifestyle w/ attached three-car garage (Special Work Areal, 3 months pre-paid), sunglasses [Capacity 4, low-light, flare compensation, vision enhancement 2], Transys Avalon commlink (Device Rating 6)
Weapons	Ares Light Fire 75 [Light Pistol, Acc 6 (8), DV 6P, AP —, SA, RC —,16 (c), w/ 50 rounds regular ammo] Ares Predator V [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5 (7), DV 7P, AP -4, SA, RC —,15 (c), w/ 50 rounds regular ammo] Streetline Special [Hold-out Pistol, Acc 4, DV 6P, AP —, SA, RC —,6 (c), w/ 50 rounds regular ammo] Defiance EX Shocker [Taser, Acc 4, DV 9S(e), AP –5, SS, RC —,4 (m), w/ 50 taser darts]
Contacts	Mechanic (Connection 3, Loyalty 4) Coast Guard Captain (Connection 2, Loyalty 3) Fixer (Connection 1, Loyalty 1)
Starting ¥	1,145 + (4D6 x 100)¥





SPRAWL GANGER

Gangers. The sprawl's filled with them. Most wind up dead or in jail, a rare few crawl into positions of power, and some? Some graduate to the big time. The sprawl ganger is a cut above the usual street scum; he's faster, smarter, tougher, meaner, and has learned how to run an operation. He's seen how much nuyen passes upstairs and has decided that he wants to start taking a bigger cut by going pro and running the shadows. He's not a part of his gang anymore (though everyone knows you never really leave) and is in business for himself, kicking some of his funds back to his family and his neighborhood. In return, the neighborhood looks out for him. After narrowly escaping with his life (but minus an arm), he's starting to realize that there's more to life than being a gangbanger—now he just has to figure out what that is.

METATYPE: ORK

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG
7	4	4	7	4	4	3	4	4.6	1

Condition Monitor (P/S)	13 / 10
Armor	12
Limits	Physical 9, Mental 5, Social 6
Physical Init	8 + 1D6
Active Skills	Armorer 1, Athletics skill group 2, Automatics 1, Blades 3, Clubs 3, Computer 1, Con 1, Cybertechnology 1, Etiquette (Street) 2 (+2), First Aid 1, Intimidation 5, Leadership 3, Locksmith 1, Mechanics skill group 1, Navigation 1, Negotiation 3, Perception 3, Performance 3, Pilot Ground Craft 2, Pistols 3, Stealth skill group 2, Throwing Weapons 1, Unarmed Combat 5
Knowledge Skills	Business 2, Seattle Street Gangs (Crimson Crush) 4(+2), Sprawl life 3, Street drugs 2
Languages	English (City Speak) N, Or'zet 2
Qualities	Dependent (6: several brothers and sisters), Distinctive Style, Guts, Home Ground (You know a guy), Prejudice (Outspoken against elves)
Augmentations	Cyberarm (standard, used, obvious)
Gear	Armored jacket [12, w/ nonconductivity 6], armorer kit, automotive mechanics kit, cybertechnology kit, fake SIN (Rating 3), earbuds [Rating 1], fake gun license (Rating 3), glasses [Rating 1, w/ image link], Harley-Davidson Scorpion, industrial mechanic kit, jazz (4 doses), Low Lifestyle (2 months), medkit (Rating 3), 10 plastic restraints, Renraku Sensei commlink, respirator (Rating 1), survival kit
Weapons	Colt America L36 [Light Pistol, Acc 7, DV 7P, AP —, SA, RC —, 11(c), w/ concealed holster, 2 spare clips, 110 rounds of regular ammo] Combat axe [Blade, Reach 2, Acc 4, DV 12P, AP –4] Extendable baton [Club, Reach 1, Acc 5, DV 7S, AP —] Knife [Blade, Reach —, Acc 5, DV 7P, AP –1] Ruger Super Warhawk [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5, DV 9P, AP –2, SS, RC —, 6(cy), w/ 2 speed loaders, 60 rounds regular ammo] Streetline Special [Hold-out, Acc 4, DV 6P, AP —, SA, RC —, w/ concealed history, 30 rounds regular ammo]
Contacts	Fixer (Connection 3/Loyalty 1) Sprawl Ganger (Connection 2/Loyalty 5) Street Kid (Connection 1/Loyalty 3)
Notes	Natural low-light vision
Starting ¥	1,500 x (3D6 x 60)¥

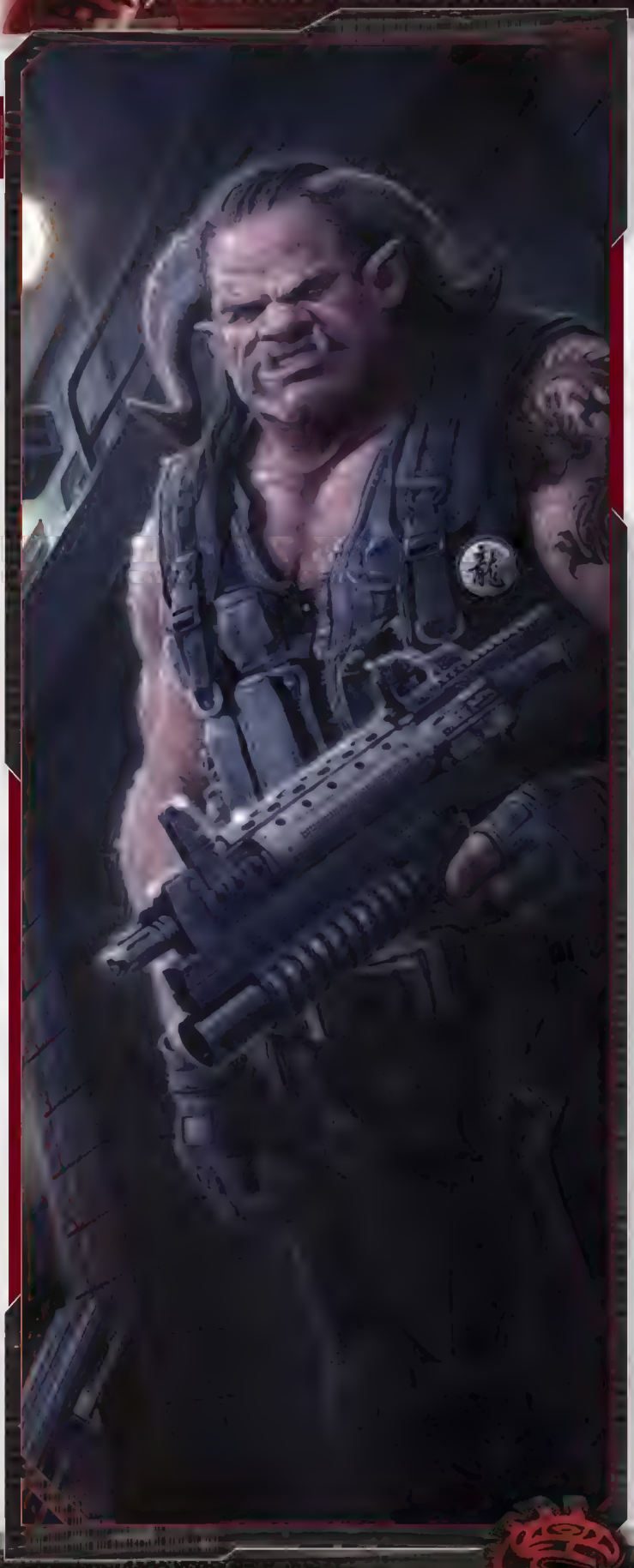
BOUNTY HUNTER

He'll hunt man or beast—bail jumpers, devil rats, runaway daughters, wyverns ... whatever you pay him to find, he'll track it down and bring it back alive, dead, or as a trophy. Truth be told, it's not the money that matters so much as the challenge of pitting himself against man and/or beast, facing down whatever life throws at him and returning the winner. Plains, desert, or the concrete jungle, he's the alpha predator. And you? You're just prey. Run if you want, but when he's chasing, he knows how it'll end.

METATYPE: TROLL

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG
7 (8)	3	3	8	3	3	3	2	6.0	1

Condition Monitor (P/S)	12 / 10
Armor	9
Limits	Physical 9, Mental 4, Social 5
Physical Init	6 + 1D6
Active Skills	Animal Handling 2, Archery 4, Armorer 1, Athletics skill group 4, Auto Mechanics 1, Blades 3, Clubs 3, Computer 1, Con 2, Electronics Warfare 1, First Aid 3, Influence skill group 2, Intimidation 5, Locksmith 3, Longarms 4, Outdoors skill group 4, Palming 1, Perception 3, Pilot Ground Vehicles 2, Pistols 4, Sneaking 3, Throwing Weapons 1, Unarmed Combat 5
Knowledge Skills	Parazoology 2, Police Procedures 4, Salish-Shidhe Tribal Law 3
Languages	Siouan (Crow) N, English N, Spanish 3
Qualities	Bilingual, Guts, Natural Athlete, Allergy (Soy, minor), SINner (Salish-Sidhe national, Cascade Ork tribe)
Gear	Armorer kit, auto mechanics kit, binoculars (optical), biometric scanner, climbing gear, flashlight, lined coat [9] w/ shock frills, lockpick set, Low Lifestyle (2 months), medkit (Rating 4) with 1 replacement supplies, Renraku Sensei commlink, respirator (Rating 4), restraints (1 set of manacles, 2 metal, 20 plastic), RFID tags (10 security, 10 stealth), rope (standard, 100 meters), sensor array (Rating 3) (handheld), survival kit, Toyota Gopher
Weapons	Defiance T-250 [Shotgun, Acc 4, DV 10, AP –1, SS/SA, RC —, 5(m), w/ 50 rounds standard ammo, 20 rounds Stick-n-Shock ammo] Bow (Rating 8) [Bow, Acc 6, DV 10P, AP –2, w/ 20 arrows] Chemical grenades (2) [Grenade, DV as tear gas, AP —, Blast 10m Radius] Colt America L36 [Light Pistol, Acc 7, DV 7P, AP —, SA, RC —, 11(c), w/ 2 spare clips, 110 rounds standard ammo] Extendable baton [Club, Reach 1, Acc 5, DV 10S, AP —] Flash-bang grenades (2) [Grenade, DV 10S, AP –4, Blast 10m Radius] Remington 950 [Sniper Rifle, Acc 7, DV 12P, AP –4, SS, RC—,5(m), w/ 50 rounds regular ammo] Ruger Super Warhawk [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5, DV 9P, AP -2, Mode SS, RC —, 6(cy), w/ 2 speed loaders, 60 rounds regular ammo] Smoke grenades (2) [Grenade, DV —, AP —, Blast 10m Radius] Stun baton [Club, Reach 1, Acc 4, DV 9S(e), AP –5] Survival knife [Blade, Reach —, Acc 5, DV 10P, AP –1] Throwing knife [Throwing Weapon, Acc Physical, DV 9P, AP –1] Yamaha Pulsar [Taser, Acc 5, DV 9S(e), AP –5, SA, RC —, 4(m), w/ 10 darts
Contacts	Parole officer (Connection 2/Loyalty 2) Tribal official (Connection 2/Loyalty 2)
Starting ¥	4,116 + (3D6 x 60)¥



SKILLS

Information in the Sixth World comes cheaper than day-old soykaf. Ubiquitous Matrix access means every scrap of paydata about everyone and everything is only a datajack away. So if you want to be good, you can't just *know* stuff—you have to *do* stuff. Turning information into action is what having a **skill** is all about. *Shadowrun* skills represent the broad application of information and techniques in a given subject. In *Shadowrun*, skills allow you to act in the Sixth World physically, socially, magically, technically, and so on. The way each character applies a skill can be as varied as clothing styles. Because skills are so broadly defined, players have the freedom to determine the specific learned behaviors and training their characters will accumulate over time. This type of narrow focus is known as a specialization (**Specializations**, p. 129).

SKILL TYPES

Skills are the abilities that you learn over time. They're grouped into three broad categories: Active, Knowledge, and Language skills. The first category governs what you do, the second what you know, and the third how you communicate with the world. During character creation, you determine your character's initial skills in all three categories. After play begins, you can improve your skills or add more by spending the Karma you earn by shadowrunning (p. 376).

Skill ranks are independent of attributes, but they don't work alone. The most common dice pools that you roll when you take actions comprise one skill and one attribute. You can study until you know every aspect of Spellcasting, but if you don't have the raw Magic ability (as measured by your attribute) to apply it, you won't be as powerful as you could be. While a skill isn't always paired with a single attribute, each skill has a **linked attribute** to which the skill is most closely related. This doesn't mean you'll always roll a skill with its linked attribute, but you'll see the two together a lot. A list of linked attributes and their skills appears on p. 151.

ACTIVE SKILLS

Active skills are used to take action and affect the world. These range from combat skills used by runners to stay alive in the sprawl to the social skills used to make sure they get paid when the run is over. For a complete description of Active skills and specializations, see p. 130.

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS

Knowledge skills represent everything a character knows and understands about a given subject. Your character begins the game with free Knowledge skills points based on your character's Logic and Intuition attributes. Knowledge skills help define who your character is, but they also can be used to influence legwork and roleplay. The knowledge a character gains over the course of a life in the shadows often influences how valuable they are or how well known they are to people. There are four basic types of Knowledge skills in *Shadowrun*: Academic, Interests, Professional, and Street. Unless otherwise noted, Knowledge skills are linked to either Logic or Intuition. We'll cover Knowledge skills in more detail on p. 147.

LANGUAGE SKILLS

Language skills represent the languages in which the characters can speak, read, and write. The higher a character's rating, the more fluent he is at these tasks. You can buy Language skills at the start of the game by using points from your Knowledge skill freebies. More information on Language skills can be found on p. 150.

USING SKILLS

Having skills means you can get things done. Unfortunately, nothing you'll do—fast talking past a bouncer, sleazing a NeoNET host, summoning a city spirit, just about anything—ever happens under perfect conditions. You'll need the right skill to resolve the problem. The gamemaster will let you know which skill fits the situation, along with any modifiers to your dice pool. Choosing skills and modifiers is an imperfect science, especially when your character knows how to do something you can't do. Null perspiration, chummer: These rules provide general guidelines on how skills and modifiers should be used.

SKILL GROUPS

Skill groups are a collection of skills (usually three, but sometimes four) based around a core concept. For example, the Outdoors skill group brings together Navigation, Survival, and Tracking, all the sort of skills an outdoorsman would have. You can purchase a skill group for less than it costs to take the three skills individually. Having a skill group at a certain rating is the same as having the three skills in the skill group at that rating. For example, if you've got Outdoors 5 and you're trying to track a basilisk through the forests of the Salish-Shidhe Council, you'd roll as though you had Tracking 5 because it's part of the Outdoors skill group.

Skill group advancement uses special rules. If you want to advance one skill from the group without advancing the rest, the skill group is broken and and you get each of the skills in the group at the former group rating; then you can increase one of the skills. If you want to get the skill group back (or get a new one), you must first get all of the skills in the group to the same rating. For more detailed information, see **Character Advancement**, p. 103.

EXAMPLE

Kevin wants his character to be good with guns. He can't decide on which type of gun is most important, so at character creation he buys the whole Firearms skill group at Rating 5. After a few sessions it is clear that Kevin's character, Mitrailleuse, is only using automatics. He saves up Karma to raise Mitrailleuse's Automatics Rating to 6 (which is cheaper than raising the entire skill group). To do this, he first breaks up his Firearms skill group, then buys the new level of Automatics. He now has Automatics 6, Longarms 5, and Pistols 5. If he wants the Firearms skill back he'll need to spend additional Karma to raise Longarms and Pistols to Rating 6 (which will cost him more than if he'd stuck with Firearms in the first place).

SKILL RATINGS

The higher your skill rating, the better you are with that skill. Someone without the Pistols skill has watched enough trideo to understand that you point the weapon away from yourself and pull the trigger, but that doesn't make them as good as a character with even an introductory skill level who has a decent firing stance and knows enough to check the safety before firing.

The skill Rating is a numerical value ranging from 1, representing the most rudimentary skill, to 12 (or 13 with the Aptitude quality) representing the height of sentient achievement.

When you see them written, the skill rating comes immediately after the name of the skill. Rating 5 Hacking is written as "Hacking 5" on the character sheet and in other game materials. A skill's Rating adds to the number of dice you use to perform the action with the skill. The rules will call for the skill and an attribute to go along with it—just add the Ratings together and pick up that many dice. For example, hitting a Halloweener over the head with a metal pipe calls for Clubs + Agility—if your Agility is 3 and your Clubs skill is 4, you get 7 dice for the attack.

SPECIALIZATIONS

If you devote extra time to a subset of a skill, it's called a **specialization.** If your character has the Gymnastics skill but spends a lot of time practicing parkour, you get a character that is good at Gymnastics but especially good at climbing past obstacles.

A specialization adds 2 dice to any test made for that skill when the specialization comes into play. You write the specialization in parentheses right after the skill, and then add a "(+2)" after the rating to remind you of the bonus. Characters can have multiple specializations within the same skill, but one applies at a time. For example, a character with the Blades skill who specializes in Axes and Parrying would only receive a +2 dice bonus to tests when parrying with an axe.

New characters may only take one specialization per skill at character creation (**Creating a Shadowrunner**, p. 62), but you can buy more later. If you want a specialization in a skill, you have to have it first (meaning a

EXAMPLE

Petra decides to get the most use out of her cyber spur. She takes the Cyber Weapon specialization for her Unarmed Combat skill. This gives her Unarmed Combat (Cyber Weapons) 4 (+2). Now she gets to roll 6 dice plus her Attribute dice when the spur comes out.

Rating of at least 1). Specializations are not allowed for skill groups.

DEFAULTING

It is impossible to prepare for every scenario and only slightly harder to have every skill. When you perform an action without actually having the skill for the test, there's still hope. You can **default** the skill, making the test using only the attribute to form the dice pool. You don't have any tremendous talent when you default—quite the opposite in fact. Defaulting imposes a -1 dice pool modifier in addition to any other modifiers the situation demands. Unless the gamemaster feels that you're at a complete loss when defaulting, you can use Edge to Push the Limit (p. 56) and better your chances.

Some skills are too technically demanding for you to default. In these cases, you don't get to even try the test; you just fail. Pilot Ground Craft or Unarmed Combat, for example, are relatively simple skills that can be attempted without formal training, so you can default if you need to. Aeronautics Mechanic, on the other hand, is too complicated to try without some training (you could say it's rocket science). Skills that cannot be defaulted are given in italics on the Active Skill List (p. 151)—and it's also mentioned in the skill description.

EXAMPLE

They never told Apagar people would still be in the building this late. Now some middling data research officer is asking the shadowrunner for pointers on how to keep the drek in his cubicle from walking away. Sure, the stolen uniform says Centurion Security, but damn if Apagar knows the first thing about talking to suits. The gamemaster asks for an Etiquette + Charisma test, which would come in handy if Apagar had any ranks in Etiquette. Sadly, he doesn't, so he only has a vague idea of how to respond in this situation. He has to default, fumbling through a response and relying on his Charisma attribute of 3. The –1 dice pool modifier leaves him with 2 dice to convince the corporate worker to move along and let him do his work. This may need to be settled with bullets.

SUBSTITUTING SKILLS

You don't always have to default a skill when you don't have it. Sometimes your gamemaster might allow you to use a different skill, probably with a dice pool penalty. For example, if you're trying to use makeup to disguise your face, and you don't have a Disguise skill, the gamemaster could let you use your Artisan skill with (say) a –3 dice pool penalty.

You can always do this swapping trick to use an Active skill in place of a Knowledge skill (like using your Pistols skill at a penalty to see if you know where the closest Ares Predator V manufacturer is), but never vice versa. Knowing the history and mechanics of the modern pistol doesn't make you a better shot.

COMBAT ACTIVE SKILLS

When the punching and the kicking and the shooting starts, these are the skills you use. All Combat skills are linked to Agility unless otherwise noted. For more on how skills are used in combat, refer to the **Combat** chapter, p. 158.

ARCHERY

Archery is used to fire string-loaded projectile weapons. An archer is familiar with many different styles of bow and the multitude of arrows that can be used to maximum effect.

Default: Yes
Skill Group: No
Specializations: Bow, Crossbow, Non-Standard Ammunition, Slingshot

AUTOMATICS

The Automatics skill covers a specific subset of firearms larger than handheld pistols but smaller than rifles. This category includes submachine guns and other fully automatic carbines.

Default: Yes
Skill Group: Firearms
Specializations: Assault Rifles, Cyber-Implant, Machine Pistols, Submachine Guns

BLADES

Slice and dice! The Blades skill includes the use of all handheld slashing and stabbing weapons. You can use a range of edged weapons including daggers, swords, and axes.

Default: Yes
Skill Group: Close Combat
Specializations: Axes, Knives, Swords, Parrying

This is a list of what the skill Ratings mean, so that you can get beyond the numbers and see where your character falls in the general scheme of metahumanity.

NO RATING: UNAWARE

This is something other than having no ranks in a skill—this is a special level of ignorance. You haven't the first clue about this skill. This level can only be achieved through a quality (like the Incompetent negative quality, p. 81), or maybe a character history explaining the deficiency. You can't default the skill, and it never really occurs to you to even use it to solve your problems.

RATING 0: UNTRAINED

The default level of knowledge obtained through interaction with society and the Matrix. Though untrained, you have a general awareness of the skill, and occasionally may even be able to fake it.

RATING 1: BEGINNER

You have a little training about how it works, but not always why it works.

RATING 2: NOVICE

You're a hobbyist, but not an enthusiast.

RATING 3: COMPETENT

You're skilled at basic operations but struggle with complex operations and "tricks."

RATING 4: PROFICIENT

You're comfortable with what you do and perform well under normal pressures. Professional level for most jobs.

RATING 5: SKILLED

You know how to handle yourself in unfamiliar situations, and can get creative when solving problems.

RATING 6: PROFESSIONAL

You could easily sell your skills on the open market. This is the maximum skill level for starting player characters.

RATING 7: VETERAN

You've seen a lot of what the skill can do, and what it can't. Other people ask you how to do it.

RATING 8: EXPERT

You are a highly sought-after talent. Corporations seek you out (or extract you from other corporations).

RATING 9: EXCEPTIONAL

Your name is synonymous with the skill. If you have multiple skills at this level, you're lauded as exceptionally gifted.

RATING 10: ELITE

You are famous, even among the very best in your field.

RATING 11: LEGENDARY

You are a paragon to those trying to excel at your skill. Techniques are named after you.

RATING 12–13: APEX

You have reached the pinnacle of mortal achievement. This expertise represents the top 0.00001% of all practitioners in known history. The very highest rating, 13, can only be reached with the Aptitude quality (p. 72).

CLUBS

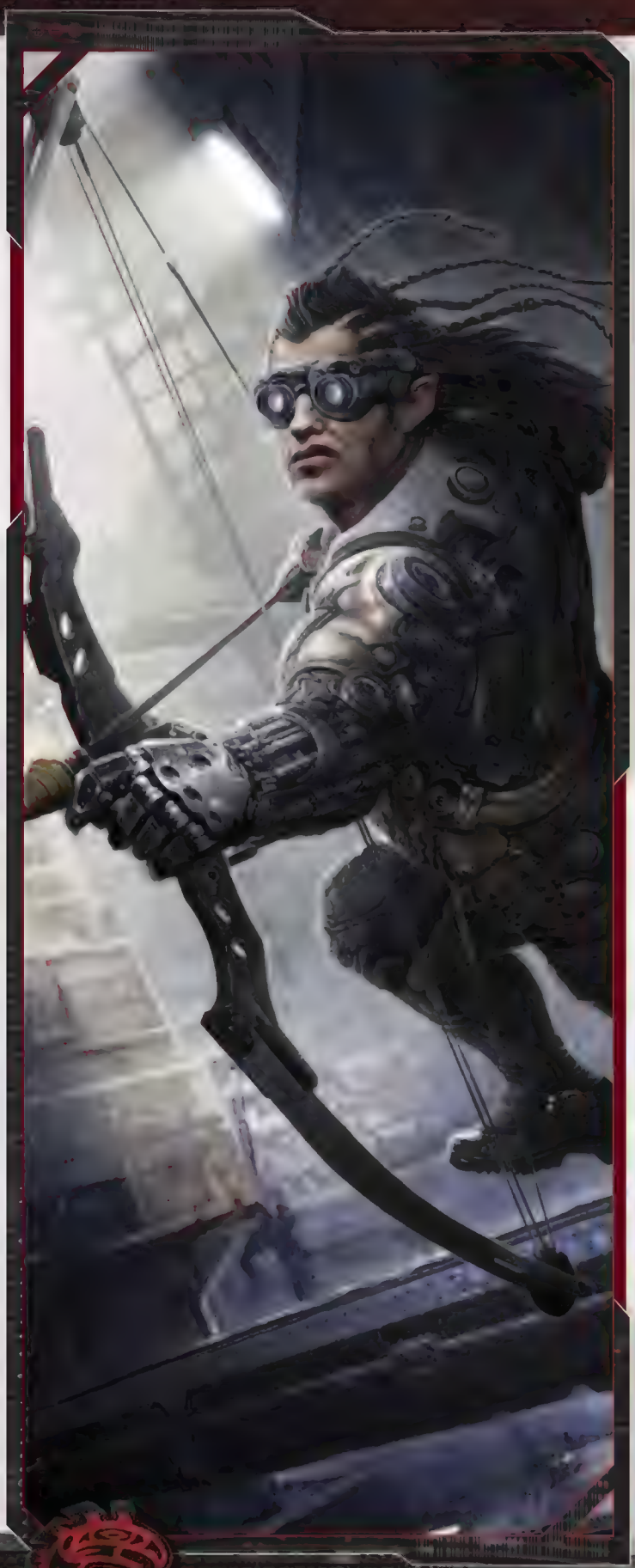
Clubs governs the use of all hand-held bludgeoning instruments. With this skill you can turn any blunt item, be it a baseball bat, crutch, or mace, into a weapon.

Default: Yes
Skill Group: Close Combat
Specializations: Batons, Hammers, Saps, Staves, Parrying

EXOTIC RANGED WEAPON (SPECIFIC)

Sometimes a regular gun or blade won't do the job and you need something fancier. Or weirder. This skill must be taken once for each unusual ranged weapon you want to use. Some examples include blowguns, gyrojet pistols, flamethrowers, and lasers.

Default: No
Skill Group: None
Specializations: None



HEAVY WEAPONS

The term heavy weapon is designated for all projectile weaponry larger than an assault rifle, such as grenade launchers, machine guns, and assault cannons. This skill is exclusive to handheld and non-vehicle-mounted weaponry—if you've got a gun mounted on or in a vehicle, use Gunnery.

Default: Yes

Skill Group: None

Specializations: Assault Cannons, Grenade Launchers, Guided Missiles, Machine Guns, Rocket Launchers

LONGARMS

The Longarms skill is for firing extended-barrel weapons such as sporting rifles and sniper rifles. This grouping also includes weapons like shotguns that are designed to be braced against the shoulder.

Default: Yes

Skill Group: Firearms

Specializations: Extended-Range Shots, Long-Range Shots, Shotguns, Sniper Rifles

PISTOLS

This skill category includes all types of handheld pistols, including tasers, single-shots, semi-automatics, and revolvers.

Default: Yes

Skill Group: Firearms

Specializations: Holdouts, Revolvers, Semi-Automatics, Tasers

THROWING WEAPONS

Throwing Weapons is a broad-based attack skill that can be used for any handheld item that is thrown by the user as a weapon.

Default: Yes

Skill Group: None

Specializations: Aerodynamic, Blades, Non-Aerodynamic

UNARMED COMBAT

Unarmed Combat covers the various self-defense and attack moves that employ the body as a primary weapon. This includes a wide array of martial arts along with the use of cybernetic implant weaponry and the fighting styles that sprung up around those implants.

Default: Yes

Skill Group: Close Combat

Specializations: Blocking, Cyber Implants, Subduing Combat, or by specific Martial Art

PHYSICAL ACTIVE SKILLS

These skills are all about actions you take with your body (besides things covered in Combat skills). You'll find the specific rules for using each skill (or a reference for where you can find the rules) in the skill description.

DISGUISE (INTUITION)

Disguise covers non-magical forms of masking your identity, including makeup and enhancement. See **Using Disguise and Impersonation**, p. 136.

Default: Yes

Skill Group: Stealth

Specializations: Camouflage, Cosmetic, Theatrical, Trideo & Video

DIVING (BODY)

Diving brings together a wide array of actions performed underwater. This skill can be applied when diving, swimming underwater, using complex diving equipment, and holding your breath.

Default: Yes

Skill Group: None

Specializations: By breathing apparatus (Liquid Breathing Apparatus, Mixed Gas, Oxygen Extraction, SCUBA), by condition (Arctic, Cave, Commercial, Military, etc.), Controlled Hyperventilation

ESCAPE ARTIST (AGILITY)

Escape Artist measures the character's ability to escape from bindings by using body contortion and manual dexterity. See **Using Escape Artist**, p. 135.

Default: Yes

Skill Group: None

Specializations: By restraint (Cuffs, Ropes, Zip Ties, etc.), Contortionism

FREE-FALL (BODY)

This skill covers any jump from height, including leaps from a third-floor window to jumps from a plane at high altitude. If it involves any kind of attempt to slow or control your fall, this covers it, so it includes skydiving with a parachute, flying a wingsuit, or descending on a line, bungee cord, or zipline.

Default: Yes

Skill Group: None

Specializations: BASE Jumping, Break-Fall, Bungee, HALO, Low Altitude, Parachute, Static Line, Wingsuit, Zipline

GYMNASTICS (AGILITY)

Gymnastics measures your balance, general athleticism, and all-around ability to use your body. For more information on ways Gymnastics may be applied in-game, see **Jumping**, p. 134.

Default: Yes

Skill Group: Athletics

Specializations: Balance, Climbing, Dance, Leaping, Parkour, Rolling

PALMING (AGILITY)

Palming is sleight-of-hand skill that gives a character the ability to snag, hide, and pass off small objects.

Default: No

Skill Group: Stealth

Specializations: Legerdemain, Pickpocket, Pilfering

PERCEPTION (INTUITION)

Perception refers to the ability to spot anomalies in everyday situations, making it one of the key skills a shadowrunner needs. See **Using Perception**, p. 135.

Default: Yes

Skill Group: None

Specializations: Hearing, Scent, Searching, Taste, Touch, Visual

RUNNING (STRENGTH)

Running, as you may guess, is about how much ground you can cover quickly. For more information see **Using Running**, p. 136.

Default: Yes

Skill Group: Athletics

Specializations: Distance, Sprinting, by terrain (Desert, Urban, Wilderness, etc.)

SNEAKING (AGILITY)

Need to get where you're not supposed to be? This skill allows you to remain inconspicuous in various situations. See **Using Stealth Skills**, p. 136.

Default: Yes

Skill Group: Stealth

Specializations: Location type (Jungle, Urban, Desert, etc.)

SURVIVAL (WILLPOWER)

In the desert with nothing more than a tin cup, a poncho, and an iron rod? You'll need this skill to help you get out alive. Survival is the ability to stay alive in extreme environmental conditions for extended periods of time. The skill governs a character's ability to perform vital outdoor tasks such as start a fire, build a shelter, scrounge for food, etc. in hostile environments. See **Using Survival**, p. 136.

Default: Yes

Skill Group: Outdoors

Specializations: Desert, Forest, Jungle, Mountain, Polar, Urban, or other terrain

SWIMMING (STRENGTH)

This skill determines the character's ability to swim in various bodies of water. The skill level affects the distance and speed at which a character can swim. See **Using Swimming**, p. 137

Default: Yes

Skill Group: Athletics

Specializations: Dash, Long Distance

TRACKING (INTUITION)

This skill confers the ability to detect the passage of metahumans and other game through terrain and use those clues to follow that individual. This skill also allows you to identify unmarked trails and common game paths is various environments. See **Using Tracking**, p. 137.

Default: Yes

Skill Group: Outdoors

Specializations: Desert, Forest, Jungle, Mountain, Polar, Urban, another terrain type

CLIMBING TABLE

SITUATION	MOVEMENT DISTANCE (ROUND UP)
Assisted climbing down (rappelling)	20 meters + 1 meter per hit
Assisted climbing upward	1 meter per hit
Assisted climbing horizontally	1 meter per 2 hits
Assisted climbing upside down (on a ceiling or overhang)	1 meter per 3 hits
Unassisted climbing upward	1 meter per 2 hits
Unassisted climbing down	1 meter per hit
SITUATION	**DICE POOL MODIFIER**
Assisted climbing	+2
SURFACE IS	**DICE POOL MODIFIER**
Easily climbable (chain-link fence)	+1
Broken (tree, loose stone wall)	+0
Flat (brick wall, side of old building)	–3
Sheer (metal wall, seamless stone)	–5
Slippery or wet	–2
Greased or gel-treated	–4

USING GYMNASTICS

A few uses of the Gymnastics skill require special rules.

CLIMBING

The Gymnastics skill is applied to both *assisted* and *unassisted* climbing tasks. Assisted climbing is accomplished with specialized gear such as ropes and harnesses (see p. 448). Assisted climbing is easier and safer, but requires more preparation. Unassisted climbing may be done on the fly, because you climb without any gear. Climbing is a Complex Action, and the number of hits you get on your Gymnastics + Strength [Physical] Test determines how far you can move vertically or laterally during your climb, as noted on the Climbing Table. The more difficult the climb, the more dice pool modifiers you get, which is also noted on the Climbing Table.

RAPPELLING

Rappelling is a gear-aided descent at near free-fall speed. This technique requires a Free-Fall + Body [Physical] (2) Success Test. So long as you have the proper gear and training, you can brake at any point in the descent, slow your speed, and land safely. Rappelling expends a Simple Action, during which you fall at a rate of 20 meters per Combat Turn. Rappelling characters can increase the number of meters descended during that same Combat Turn by 1 for each net hit beyond the threshold on the Free-Fall Test. If you take another Simple Action in the same phase, such as firing a weapon, you get a –2 dice pool modifier to both that action and the Free-Fall Test. Stopping requires another Free-Fall Test with the same threshold. On an unsuccessful test, you don't slow down and may take damage if you hit the ground at speed (**Falling Damage**, p. 172).

CLIMBING FAILURES AND GLITCHES

A test while climbing or rappelling automatically halts your progress, and you have to make a Reaction + Strength Test to hold on. If you fail this second test, you start to fall (about 20 meters per Combat Turn). During your next Action Phase, you may attempt to stop by making a Reaction + Strength Test with a –2 dice pool modifier. Your gamemaster may allow other climbers to make a Reaction + Strength Test to grab you.

Characters who are using climbing gear are allowed an additional test if they fall. Have the character who prepared the safety lines make a Free-Fall + Logic [Mental] Test against a threshold equal to half the falling character's Body (round down). The falling character may apply Edge to this test. If successful, the safety gear catches, leaving the character dangling. If it fails, the character falls (see **Falling Damage**, p. 172).

JUMPING

Jumping is done from a running or standing position. Running leaps get more distance than standing jumps do, if you have enough room to get up to full speed. Make a Gymnastics + Agility Test, applying any appropriate modifiers. For every hit you get on this test, you jump 1 meter on a standing jump or 2 meters for a run-

ning leap. No matter how many hits you get, you can't jump farther than your Agility x 1.5 meters (net hits beyond this mean you did it with *style*).

For a vertical jump, it's the same test, but you get half a meter of altitude per hit and the maximum you can jump is 1.5 times your height.

EXAMPLE

Automatic Jane bursts through the door to the rooftop, gunshots pinging all around her. A pair of Aztechnology officers thunder up the steps behind her. A quick glance to survey the scene reveals two options: the building on the left or the farther one on the right. The rooftop to the left is two meters away, but she knows the goons can make that jump. Automatic Jane presses her luck, braving the five-meter gap to the right. She rolls Gymnastics 3 + Agility 5, getting 5 hits (under her Physical limit). High school gymnastics finally pays off, and she hits the rooftop in stride, glancing back to see the two Aztech officers make the leap together. The first hits smoothly, but the second stumbles as he jumps, falling short of the mark. The officer reaches out and his partner catches him by the wrist, saving him from plummeting to the street below. That ought to buy her enough time to escape.

USING ESCAPE ARTIST

In *Shadowrun*, you might just find yourself caught instead of killed. Escape Artist provides a chance to escape from most forms of confinement, including ropes, handcuffs, and other bindings. To get out of restraints, make an Escape Artist + Agility [Physical] Test against a threshold based on what you're trying to get out of. If you succeed, you're free after working on it for one minute (20 Combat Turns), divided by the number of net hits you get on the test. The dice pool is modified by a variety of factors, such as whether or not you're being watched (and trying to be subtle) or if you're carrying a set of lockpicks. These situational modifiers are on the **Escape Artist Table**. The gamemaster may decide that some restraints are too difficult to escape from without outside help.

EXAMPLE

Walking into the Monobe office without a disguise was a mistake—security grabbed Taro before he made it to the elevators. After a brief scuffle he wound up handcuffed to a bench in an observation room. Taro has Escape Artist 6 and Agility 5. His threshold to escape from the cuffs is 3. He rolls 11 dice (6 + 5) scoring exactly 3 hits! The cuffs were tighter than expected, but the runner struggles free. Taro rubs his sore wrists and looks around the room, figuring out what to do next.

ESCAPE ARTIST TABLE

RESTRAINTS	THRESHOLD
Rope, plastic cuffs	2
Metal handcuffs	3
Straitjacket	4
Containment manacles	5
Reinforced material	+1
SITUATION	**MODIFIER**
Character being watched	–2
Character physically restrained	–(Restrainer's Strength)
Character has picks or cutting implement	+2

USING PERCEPTION

Perception Tests are for any situation involving basic senses (sight, hearing, smell, touch, or taste) where you're looking for something that isn't obvious. Your gamemaster might call for you to make one, or you can call for a Perception Test by taking an Observe in Detail Simple Action to get a handle on what's going down around you. Making the threshold on a Perception + Intuition [Mental] Test indicates that you've noticed something subtle or important (or both)—net hits determine how much detail you get. If someone is deliberately trying to hide from you, they'll oppose your test with their own skill (**Using Stealth Skills**, p. 136).

Perception Tests involving vision (which is most of them) use the same Visibility and Light modifiers as attacks do in combat (**Environmental Modifiers**, p. 173). Other modifiers are listed on the Perception Test Modifiers table. If a bunch of people are making a Perception Test and looking for the same thing, use a Teamwork Test (p. 49).

PERCEPTION TEST MODIFIERS

SITUATION	DICE POOL MODIFIER
Perceiver is distracted	–2
Perceiver is specifically looking/listening for it	+3
Object/sound not in immediate vicinity	–3
Object/sound far away	–3
Object/sound stands out in some way	+2
Interfering sight/odor/sound	–2
Perceiver has active enhancements	+ (Rating)
Visibility and Light	Environmental Factors, p. 173

PERCEPTION THRESHOLDS

ITEM/EVENT IS:	THRESHOLD	EXAMPLES
Obvious/Large/Loud	1	Neon sign, running crowd, yelling, gunfire
Normal	2	Street sign, pedestrian, conversation, silenced gunfire
Obscured/Small/Muffled	3	Item dropped under table, contact lens, whispering
Hidden/Micro/Silent	4	Secret door, needle in haystack, subvocal speech

USING RUNNING

The Running skill allows you to increase the distance you can cover in a Combat Turn by taking a Sprint Action (p. 162) in their Action Phase. You make a Running + Strength [Physical] Test. Each hit adds 1 or 2 meters to your distance for that Combat Turn, based on your metatype (see **Movement**, p. 161). The gamemaster may apply modifiers for various types of terrain (rocky, slippery, and so on) and other conditions. You can run non-stop for a maximum number of minutes equal to your (Body + Running) x 10. Fatigue damage begins to take effect after this point (see **Fatigue Damage**, p. 172).

USING STEALTH SKILLS

Skill tests in the Stealth skill group boil down to staying hidden when someone is trying to find you. Treat this as an Opposed Test using Perception + Intuition, and apply any appropriate Perception modifiers (see p. 135). The gamemaster can decide to swap out Perception for a suitable skill from the Stealth skill group at no penalty. For example, if a Triad assassin is trying to spot you in a crowd, she could rely on her own experience at hiding and roll Sneaking + Intuition.

EXAMPLE

Tumbler is trying to slip a tail on the crowded downtown Seattle streets. He knows the undercover cop is only a few yards away, so he pulls his hood up over his head and blends into a crowd. Tumbler rolls Sneaking 3 + Agility 3 and gets 2 hits. The gamemaster uses the cop's Sneaking as well, rolling Sneaking 5 + Intuition 4. The cop gets a +3 dice pool modifier because she is looking for Tumbler specifically and knows what he looks like, but she also gets a –2 modifier because there are so many people on the street. She nets 1 bonus die, giving her 10 dice to roll. She scores 6 hits—it doesn't look like Tumbler is getting away that easily.

USING DISGUISE AND IMPERSONATION

Disguise and Impersonation are also handled using Opposed Tests. When the makeup and costuming are first applied, the character creating the disguise performs a Disguise + Intuition [Mental] Test. The number of hits rolled is the threshold for anyone trying to see through the disguise later on.

Impersonation can be used to improve a disguise, or it can stand alone. A character in disguise can roll their Impersonation + Charisma [Social] and add the number of hits to the threshold for breaking the disguise. If Impersonation is being used without the benefit of a disguise (such as when vocally imitating someone), treat it as standard Opposed Test.

A Disguise Kit (see **Tools**, p. 443) can be used to build a Disguise, using the **Building & Repairing** rules (p. 146). Add half the threshold of the Extended Test used to make the disguise as a dice pool bonus to your Disguise Test, to a maximum bonus of 4.

EXAMPLE

Cade knows the best way to break into the Evo facility is to pose as one of the workers. He spent days observing the place, looking for a worker who was the closest match to his physical description. He found someone named Adam Farmar. It only took a few drinks to get the guy to spill his life story. A few drinks later, Mr. Farmar is tied up in the back of Cade's Americar. Cade takes the man's clothes and slaps on some makeup so he looks even more like Farmar. He rolls his Disguise 2 + Intuition 4 and scores 2 hits. The clothes fit well enough, but it's going to take more than a disguise to fool the guards. He drives Farmar's car right up to the front gate, where is he asked to show ID. Cade laughs just like Farmar would and makes some small talk. He rolls his Impersonation 3 + Charisma 4 and scores 4 more hits, bringing the total threshold to 7. The guard makes a Perception 4 + Intuition 3 roll to see through the disguise. She only scores 2 hits. She is convinced that Cade is Adam Farmar and waves him through.

USING SURVIVAL

Surviving the elements is more dangerous in the Sixth World. Environmental decay has reached unparalleled heights. In Great Britain, for example, a perfect storm of toxic disasters and severe flooding devastated the countryside. Those forced to live on city streets fare no better. The homeless are as likely to be attacked by a swarm of devil rats as they are to be beaten by a ganger looking for a bit of fun.

The Survival skill is used for braving all forms of extreme outdoor conditions—this includes urban survival, where the threats are as likely to come from other people as they are from the elements. It covers the ability to find food, water, and temporary shelter in any environment. If you're exposed to these conditions for 24 hours or more, you'll need to start making daily Surviv-

al + Willpower [Mental] Tests. Modifiers and thresholds for Survival Tests are provided on the Survival Test Table. If you fail the test, you don't find the food or shelter you need and take Stun damage with a Damage Value equal to twice the threshold. The Stun damage cannot be healed until you get a good night's sleep without having to make a Survival Test. If your Stun Condition Monitor overflows and you fall unconscious, you cannot make your Survival Tests, so you just keep taking the damage (now Physical from overflow) until you're either rescued or dead.

SURVIVAL TEST TABLE

WILDERNESS TERRAIN	THRESHOLD
Mild (forest, plains, urban)	1
Moderate (foothills, jungle, swamp)	2
Tough (desert, high mountains)	3
Extreme (Arctic, Antarctic)	5+
SITUATION	**POOL MODIFIER**
Camping/survival gear on hand	+2
No food or water	–2
Heat/climate control available	+1
Inappropriate clothing/armor	–1 to –4
Extended travel or exertion	–1 to –4
Toxic terrain	–2 to –4
Character injured	– Wound Modifier
WEATHER	**POOL MODIFIER**
Poor	–1
Terrible	–2
Extreme	–4

USING SWIMMING

Swimming is a Complex Action. A swimming character can move a number of meters in a Combat Turn equal to the average of their Agility and Strength. You can take a Simple Action to "sprint" with a Swimming + Strength [Physical] Test, adding 1 meter per hit, or 2 meters per hit if you're an elf or a troll. Swimming on the surface of water or under it does not affect this rate of speed. As with the Running skill, swimmers suffer from fatigue after an extended time (**Fatigue Damage**, p. 172).

HOLDING YOUR BREATH

Sixty seconds (twenty Combat Turns) is the base time a character can hold his breath before any tests are needed. A character needing to hold his breath longer can make a Swimming + Willpower Test (with the Controlled Hyperventilation specialization coming into play if you have it). Each net hit extends the clock by 15 seconds (5 Combat Turns).

Once the time expires the character must breathe or take 1 box of Stun damage at the end of each Combat Turn until they breathe (this damage cannot be resisted). Once all the stun boxes are filled, the character loses consciousness. At this point the character takes one box of physical damage at the end of each Combat Turn until rescued or dead.

TREADING WATER

If you're just trying to keep afloat, you can tread water. You can tread water for a number of minutes equal to your Strength rating. At the end of this time, make a Simple Swimming + Strength [Physical] (2) Test. Success means you can keep treading water (or float, if you're skilled at Swimming) for the same amount of time before another test; failure means you slip and take 1 box of Stun damage that you can't resist. If you have a flotation device, double the time between tests. You can keep treading water as long as you can stay conscious.

USING TRACKING

Tracking a person or critter requires a Tracking + Intuition [Mental] Test with a threshold based on the terrain (decided by the gamemaster using the **Success Test Thresholds** table, p. 45). If the target is actively obscuring their trail, tracking is handled as an Opposed Test. The tracker rolls Tracking + Intuition [Mental] against the target's Sneak + Agility [Physical]. Any net successes on a Tracking Test can be used to gain additional information about the trail, such as the number of people using the trail, type of critters recently using it, and how old the tracks are. In urban tracking, additional hits can be used to identify local crowd movement patterns, relevant cameras, and AR clues that reveal where the target was heading and how long ago it passed by.

The gamemaster may choose to apply modifiers for conditions such as weather, age of the tracks, the amount of people who've trampled the trail, and so on. Individuals using a tracking dog or other tracking critter may use Animal Handling as a Teamwork Test for their animal's Tracking Test.

SOCIAL SKILLS

Dice rarely need to get involved when characters need to solve problems between one another. Dealing with NPCs isn't always so easy. Social skills give characters the ability to problem-solve without expending bullets or mana. These skills tend to be linked to the Charisma attribute.

Social skills are intended to be used to complement good role-playing, not replace it. The Social Test should come either at the end of a well-role-played scene to wrap it up, or in place of a social situation that would be less interesting to actually play through to get through it quickly. The gamemaster can provide modifiers on this test based on how well you make your point, or how much bulldrek you're able to pile up without flinching.

CON (CHARISMA)

Con governs the ability to manipulate or fool an NPC during a social encounter. This skill covers a range of confidence games as well as the principles behind those cons.

Default: Yes
Skill Group: Acting
Specializations: Fast Talking, Seduction

ETIQUETTE (CHARISMA)

Etiquette represents the level of understanding and awareness of proper social rituals. The skill works as a sort of social version of Sneak, allowing you to move unimpeded through various social situations. Etiquette also serves as a social safety net in case a player botches a social situation in a way a skilled character would not. See **Using Etiquette**, p. 141.

Default: Yes
Skill Group: Influence
Specializations: By culture or subculture (Corporate, High Society, Media, Mercenary, Street, Yakuza, etc.)

IMPERSONATION (CHARISMA)

Impersonation is the ability to assume the identity of another person, including voice and physical mannerisms. The skill is limited by the physical abilities of the character. A dwarf might be able to impersonate a troll over a commlink, but the illusion shatters when he is face to face with his target.

Default: Yes
Skill Group: Acting
Specializations: By metahuman type (Dwarf, Elf, Human, Ork, Troll)

INSTRUCTION (CHARISMA)

Instruction governs the ability to teach people. The skill level helps determine how comfortable the instructor is delivering new material as well as how complex of a skill may be taught. See **Using Instruction**, p. 141.

Default: Yes
Skill Group: None
Specializations: By Active or Knowledge skill category (Combat, Language, Magical, Academic Knowledge, Street Knowledge, etc.)

INTIMIDATION (CHARISMA)

Intimidation is about creating the impression that you are more menacing than another person in order to get them to do what you want. The skill may be applied multiple ways, from negotiation to interrogation. Intimidation is an Opposed Intimidation + Charisma [Social] Test against the target's Charisma + Willpower, modified by the appropriate entries on the Social Modifiers Table (p. 140).

Default: Yes

Skill Group: None

Specializations: Interrogation, Mental, Physical, Torture

LEADERSHIP (CHARISMA)

Leadership is the ability to direct and motivate others. It's like Con, except rather than using deception you're using a position of authority. This skill is especially helpful in situations where the will of a teammate is shaken or someone is being asked to do something uncomfortable. The Leadership skill is not meant to replace or make up for poor teamwork. When using Leadership make an opposed test Charisma + Leadership. See **Using Social Influence Skills**, at right, for test modifiers.

Default: Yes

Skill Group: Influence

Specializations: Command, Direct, Inspire, Rally

NEGOTIATION (CHARISMA)

Negotiation governs a character's ability to apply their charisma, tactics, and knowledge of situational psychology in order to create a better position when making deals.

Default: Yes

Skill Group: Influence

Specializations: Bargaining, Contracts, Diplomacy

PERFORMANCE (CHARISMA)

This skill governs the ability to execute a performing art. Performance is to the arts what Artisan is to craft. The performer uses her skill to entertain or even captivate an audience. See **Using Performance**, p. 141.

Default: Yes

Skill Group: Acting

Specializations: By performance art (Presentation, Acting, Comedy, specific Musical Instrument, etc.)

USING SOCIAL SKILLS

At the core of *Shadowrun* is the idea that the characters are outsiders trying to survive in the shadow of the old boys' network of corporate suits, elven princes, government interests, wageslaves, street gangs, etc. These kinds of people know who belongs and how to deal with one another. Social skills are your ticket into these social networks. They start when you walk into the room and continue as you interact with other people.

SOCIAL MODIFIERS

Anyone can be swayed, given the right place, right time, and right conditions. Social modifiers represent the conditions that affect your interaction with NPCs. Smells, crowd noise, attire, distractions, and even an NPC's state of mind can play a factor in the interaction. For example, you'd be hard pressed to convince Mr. Johnson of your professionalism if you show up to the meet in ripped jeans and a blood-spattered longcoat, and that would make your chances of negotiating a better fee for the run kinda harsh. The gamemaster should assess each social situation and apply modifiers as he feels appropriate. Unless otherwise noted, Opposed Test modifiers affect one character or the other. A few modifiers affect both characters.

BIGOTRY IN THE SIXTH WORLD

Even after half a century of living with various metatypes, prejudice is still a factor in social situations. Social, cultural, and racial differences have defined how we act toward one another for all of history. As the world shot into the 21st century, the "us vs. them" dichotomy burst into bright contrast with the return of magic, the rise of technomancy, and most obviously the evolution of metahuman races. As in the past, proponents of prejudice justify their feelings with claims of necessity. Magic users, they say, are uncontrolled menaces that, with one strand of your hair, can murder you from a distance. Technomancers slip unseen through the digital world stealing your wealth and destroying your life. Orks and trolls are monsters of nightmare that know nothing but violence. Elves and dragons seek to rule our planet, making us their slaves. The pre-Awakening prejudices are still not dead, either, just slightly puckered and faded in the presence of a batch of new "others."

USING SOCIAL INFLUENCE SKILLS

Most of the Social skills are used to influence people. The specific test to make is based on the skill you're using—check out the Social Skill Tests table for specifics.

When you're trying to influence a crowd, the gamemaster will use the leader of that crowd to oppose you, even if you're not addressing the leader directly. The leader has an "ace in the hole" for this test—the crowd is on his side—so he gets a +2 dice pool bonus. He also gets a limit bonus equal to the number of people backing his side of the Social skill test.

SOCIAL MODIFIERS

GENERAL MODIFIERS	DICE MODIFIER	GENERAL MODIFIERS	DICE MODIFIER
The NPC's attitude toward the character is:			
Friendly	+2	Neutral	+0
Suspicious	–1	Prejudiced	–2
Hostile	–3	Enemy	–4
Character's desired result is:			
Advantageous to NPC	+1	Of no value to NPC	+0
Annoying to NPC	–1	Harmful to NPC	–3
Disastrous to NPC	–4	Control Thoughts/Emotions spell cast on	–1 per hit
Character has (known) street reputation	+ (Street Cred, see p. 372)	Subject has (known) street reputation	– (Street Cred, see p. 372)
Subject has "ace in the hole"	+2	Subject has romantic attraction to character	+2
Character is intoxicated	–1§		

CON MODIFIERS	DICE MODIFIER	CON MODIFIERS	DICE MODIFIER
Character has plausible-seeming evidence	+1 or 2	Subject is distracted	+1
Subject has time to evaluate situation	–1		

ETIQUETTE MODIFIERS	DICE MODIFIER	ETIQUETTE MODIFIERS	DICE MODIFIER
Character is wearing the wrong attire or doesn't have the right look	–2	Character is obviously nervous, agitated, or frenzied	–2
Subject is distracted	–1†		

INTIMIDATION MODIFIERS	DICE MODIFIER	INTIMIDATION MODIFIERS	DICE MODIFIER
Character is physically imposing	+1 to +3	Subject is physically imposing	–1 to –3
Characters outnumber the subject(s)	+2	Subjects outnumber the character(s)	–2
Character wielding weapon or obvious magic	+2	Subject wielding weapon or obvious magic	–2
Character is causing (or has caused) subject physical pain (torture)	+2	Subject is oblivious to danger or doesn't think character "would try something so stupid"	+2

LEADERSHIP MODIFIERS	DICE MODIFIER	LEADERSHIP MODIFIERS	DICE MODIFIER
Character has superior rank	+1 to +3	Subject has superior rank	–1 to –3
Character is an obvious authority figure	+1	Character not part of subject's social strata	–1 to –3
Subject is a fan or devoted to character	+2		

NEGOTIATION MODIFIERS	DICE MODIFIER	NEGOTIATION MODIFIERS	DICE MODIFIER
Character lacks background knowledge of situation	–2§	Character has blackmailed material or heavy bargaining chip	+2

** Unless otherwise noted, these dice pool modifiers apply to the acting character's dice pool.* *† These modifiers apply to the target character's dice pool.* *§ These modifiers can apply to either character's dice pool.*

EXAMPLE

The last thing Torley expected was a gun to his head. The ganger poised behind him is gruff and eager to squeeze off a round unless Torley can explain why he was following her. Hands high in the air, Torley's first instinct is to con the young street tough and her friends. His Con 3 and Charisma 5 give him 8 dice before any modifiers are imposed. However, he's got nothing to back up his lie, and it's clear the ganger has been on to him for some time (–1 die). Besides, the ganger is so hostile (–3 dice) that she might not even take the time to listen.

There is another option. Torley's an imposing ork, and the gamemaster gives him +2 dice for that fact. His Intimidation 6 and Charisma 5 give him 11 dice to roll, plus the 2 for being an ork for a total of 13. He rolls and scores 4 hits. The ganger gets 5 dice (Intimidation 2 + Willpower 3) initially, and she's backed up by four of her buddies, so she gets +2 dice and her Social limit is bumped up by 3 for the roll. She rolls 7 dice, but only manages a single success. Torley lowers his hands and growls, "You got no clue who I am, do you, girl?" The ganger steps back and lowers her pistol, suddenly willing to talk.

SOCIAL SKILL TESTS

CHARACTER ROLL	TARGET ROLL
Con + Charisma [Social]	Con + Charisma [Social]
Etiquette + Charisma [Social]	Perception + Charisma [Social]
Impersonation + Charisma [Social]	Perception + Intuition [Mental]
Intimidation + Charisma [Social]	Charisma + Willpower
Leadership + Charisma [Social]	Leadership + Willpower [Social]
Negotiation + Charisma [Social]	Negotiation + Charisma [Social]
Performance + Charisma [Social]	Charisma + Willpower

USING PERFORMANCE

Performance is a Simple Test with a Social limit—the gamemaster can use your hits to gauge the artistry of your performance. If you're trying distract a target, or sweep them up in your performance, the generic modifiers on the Social Modifiers Table (p. 140) apply, and your target(s) use their Charisma + Willpower to oppose your test.

EXAMPLE

Lady Jestyr knows her partner, Blackjack, needs to get in through the front door, but the bouncer guarding the entrance is too expensive to buy off and too big to take down. She decides to try to distract him with her incredible sense of comedic impersonation. Her Performance 8 and Charisma 6 give her 14 dice to roll. However, the guard is already suspicious of Lady Jestyr (he's professionally suspicious), costing her 1 die. He also considers her distraction annoying, costing her 1 more die. She rolls 12 dice and scores 6 hits (which is under her limit of 7).

The gamemaster rolls an Opposed Test for the bouncer to resist her humor. His Charisma 3 and Willpower 6 give him 9 dice of his own. He scores only 3 hits. The guard doubles over in fits of laughter. The gamemaster rules that the bouncer gets a one-time –3 dice pool penalty (Lady Jestyr's net hits) for his Perception Test to spot Blackjack slipping through the side door.

USING ETIQUETTE

Etiquette is about blending into the social fabric. Skilled characters can move through a social situation without anyone realizing that they don't belong. It's more than knowing the right mores (you could look those up on the Matrix), it's about trained instinct.

You can use Etiquette to ease suspicions, so that people might trust you more than they would an outsider. Make an Etiquette + Charisma [Social] Test against the other person's Perception + Charisma [Social] Opposed Test. If you get any net hits, they'll accept you. If you get 3 or more net hits, their attitude toward you will improve, moving up a line on the "NPC's attitude" section of the Social Modifiers table.

The skill is not meant to replace role-playing, but it can save you from a social blunder that you (the player) make when your character probably wouldn't have. When this happens, make an Etiquette Test against a threshold equal to the severity of the blunder (set by the gamemaster using the **Success Test Thresholds** table, p. 45). A successful test means your character recovers from the misstep.

When making Etiquette tests with a group of NPCs, use the same rules for influencing groups (**Using Social Skills**, p. 139).

ETIQUETTE & GLITCHES

A glitch on an Etiquette Test is treated the same as a social blunder—the temporary annoyance could give you a -2 dice modifier on your next social test. Critical glitches result in major social gaffes that have a lasting effect on the relationship your character has with others—the NPC's stance towards your character could move one step toward Enemy. This is the stuff of which long-time grudges and major feuds are made, the words of disrespect that set street armies into motion.

USING INSTRUCTION

From virtual instructors to how-to vids, there are numerous ways to learn skills. There is no substitute, however, for a flesh-and-blood instructor. In order to teach someone a skill, a character must have the skill at Rating 4 or higher. The teacher can only teach up to their own Instruction Rating. Teaching is an Instruction + Charisma [Social] Test. Every hit on the Teaching Test reduces the time for the student to improve their skill by a day (**Character Advancement**, p. 103).

Instruction is also used to teach spells, complex forms, rituals, and various other techniques. The rules for using Instruction are a bit different in these cases and are explained in the appropriate sections of this book.

USING LEADERSHIP

The Leadership skill is about coaxing, convincing, threatening, or challenging your subordinates, or getting people to accept you as a superior. If you lead people who accept you as their (lone) superior, even temporarily, you can take a Complex Action to make a Simple Leadership + Charisma [Social] Test. How this helps depends on what you choose to do.

Command: The target resists with a Leadership + Willpower [Mental] test (with Social Modifiers, p. 140). For every net hit you get, the target accepts you as their

leader for 1 Combat Turn. This doesn't work if you've failed on this target before.

Direct: Your hits act as a Teamwork Test for one subordinate's skill or Composure Test that they perform on or before their next Action Phase.

Inspire: Your hits act as a Teamwork Test for your subordinates' Surprise Test for the rest of the Combat Turn.

Rally: Your subordinates add 1 to their Initiative Score for every 2 hits you get.

MAGICAL SKILLS

Magic skills are reserved for those who practice magic. In order to acquire magic-specific skills, characters must be an Aspected Magician, Magician, or Mystic Adept. In order to use these skills, their Magic rating must be 1 or higher. Please visit **Magic**, p. 276, for all your Magical skill-using needs.

ALCHEMY (MAGIC)

Alchemy is used to create substances that store spells. Alchemy is most commonly used to brew potions, distill magical reagents, and even create orichalcum.

Default: No

Skill Group: Enchanting

Specializations: By trigger (Command, Contact, Time), by spell type (Combat Spells, Detection Spells, etc.)

ARCANA (LOGIC)

Arcana governs the creation of magical formulae used to create spells, foci, and all other manner of magical manipulations. Arcana is required to understand formulae that may be purchased over the counter or discovered by other means.

Default: No

Skill Group: None

Specializations: Spell Design, Focus Design, Spirit Formula

ARTIFICING (MAGIC)

Artificing is the process of crafting magical foci. The skill may also be used forensically, in order to assense qualities about an existing focus' creation and purpose. See **Artificing** p. 306.

Default: No

Skill Group: Enchanting

Specializations: Focus Analysis, Crafting (by focus type)

ASSENSING (INTUITION)

Assensing is a magic user's ability to read and interpret fluctuations in the astral world. This skill allows practitioners to learn information by reading astral auras. Only characters capable of astral perception may take this skill. For more information, see **Astral Perception**, p. 312

Default: No

Skill Group: None

Specializations: Aura Reading, Astral Signatures, by aura type (Metahumans, Spirits, Foci, Wards, etc.)

ASTRAL COMBAT (WILLPOWER)

Fighting in Astral Space requires the Astral Combat skill. Combat in the Astral World relies on a very different set of abilities and attributes than physical combatants. See **Astral Combat**, p. 315.

Default: No

Skill Group: None

Specializations: By specific weapon focus type, by opponents (Magicians, Spirits, Mana Barriers, etc.)

BANISHING (MAGIC)

Banishing is used to disrupt the link between spirits and the physical world. Banished spirits are forced to return to their native plane and are no longer required to complete unfulfilled services.

Default: No

Skill Group: Conjuring

Specializations: By spirit type (Spirits of Air, Spirits of Man, etc.)

BINDING (MAGIC)

Binding is used to compel a summoned spirit to perform a number of additional services. See **Binding**, p. 300.

Default: No

Skill Group: Conjuring

Specializations: By spirit type (Spirits of Fire, Spirits of Earth, etc.)

COUNTERSPELLING (MAGIC)

Counterspelling is a defensive skill used to defend against magical attacks and dispel sustained magical spells. See **Counterspelling**, p. 294.

Default: No

Skill Group: Sorcery

Specializations: By spell type (Combat Spells, Detection Spells, etc.)

DISENCHANTING (MAGIC)

This skill governs a character's ability to remove the enchantment from an item. See **Disenchanting**, p. 307.

Default: No

Skill Group: Enchanting

Specializations: By type (Alchemical Preparations, Power Foci, etc.)

RITUAL SPELLCASTING (MAGIC)

Ritual spellcasting is a spellcasting skill used to cast ritual spells. See **Ritual Spellcasting**, p. 295.

Default: No

Skill Group: Sorcery

Specializations: By keyword (Anchored, Spell, etc.)

SPELLCASTING (MAGIC)

The Spellcasting skill permits the character to channel mana into effects known as spells. See **Spellcasting**, p. 281.

Default: No

Skill Group: Sorcery

Specializations: By spell type (Combat Spells, Detection Spells, etc.)

SUMMONING (MAGIC)

This skill is used to summon spirits. See **Summoning**, p. 300).

Default: No

Skill Group: Conjuring

Specializations: By spirit type (Spirits of Earth, Spirits of Man, etc.)

RESONANCE SKILLS

Resonance skills are a unique subset of Matrix skills that can only be used by technomancers. Resonance skills, like magic skills, require the character to have a special attribute. The Resonance attribute also serves as the linked attribute for all of the skills.

COMPILING (RESONANCE)

Compiling involves the ability to translate the complex 0s and 1s of machine source language and the rhythms of the resonance into sprites. See **Sprites**, p. 254.

Default: No

Skill Group: Tasking

Specializations: By sprite type (Data Sprites, Machine Sprites, etc.)

DECOMPILING (RESONANCE)

Decompiling is a character's ability to effectively delete previously compiled sprites. See **Sprites**, p. 254.

Default: No

Skill Group: Tasking

Specializations: By sprite type (Courier Sprites, Fault Sprites, etc.)

REGISTERING (RESONANCE)

This skill allows a technomancer to register sprites on the Matrix, thereby convincing the grids that they are legitimate. See **Sprites**, p. 254.

Default: No

Skill Group: Tasking

Specializations: By sprite type (Crack Sprites, Data Sprites, etc.)

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Technical skills are called upon when you operate or fix something. Technical skills link to a variety of attributes, listed with the skill.

AERONAUTICS MECHANIC (LOGIC)

Aeronautics mechanics have the ability to repair a variety of aerospace vehicles, provided the proper tools and parts are available. See **Building & Repairing**, p. 145.

Default: No

Skill Group: Engineering

Specializations: Aerospace, Fixed Wing, LTA (blimp), Rotary Wing, Tilt Wing, Vector Thrust

ANIMAL HANDLING (CHARISMA)

This skill governs the training, care, riding (if they're big enough), and control of non-sentient animals. Competent trainers have the ability to handle multiple animals. It is even possible to approach an untrained animal and get it to trust you, or at least not eat you.

Default: Yes

Skill Group: None

Specializations: By animal (Cat, Bird, Hell Hound, Horse, Dolphin, etc.), Herding, Riding, Training

ARMORER (LOGIC)

Armorer encompasses the broad array of skills required to build and maintain weapons and armor. As with all mechanics-based skills, the proper tools and equipment are required to perform any repair or build operation. For thresholds and information on determining success results, see **Building & Repairing**, p. 145.

Default: Yes

Skill Group: None

Specializations: Armor, Artillery, Explosives, Firearms, Melee Weapons, Heavy Weapons, Weapon Accessories

ARTISAN (INTUITION)

This skill includes several different forms of artistic impression as well as the handcrafting of fine objects that would otherwise be produced on an assembly line. The world's top artists and crafters are considered artisans.

Default: No

Skill Group: None

Specializations: By discipline (Cooking, Sculpting, Drawing, Carpentry, etc.)

AUTOMOTIVE MECHANIC (LOGIC)

Automotive mechanics are tasked with fixing all types of ground-based vehicles ranging from commercial au-

tomobiles to wheeled drones to tanks. Repairs require the proper tools and time. See **Building & Repairing**, p. 145.

Default: No

Skill Group: Engineering

Specializations: Walker, Hover, Tracked, Wheeled

BIOTECHNOLOGY (LOGIC)

Biotechnology is a wide-ranging skill primarily used by doctors and scientists to grow organic body parts. This skill is the basis for cloning as well as all forms of bioware. Provided the right equipment is available, biotechnology can be used to repair damaged bioware, clone new tissue, or detect any bioware in a subject's body. This skill does not allow characters to install or remove bioware.

Default: No

Skill Group: None

Specializations: Bioinformatics, Bioware, Cloning, Gene Therapy, Vat Maintenance

CHEMISTRY (LOGIC)

Chemistry permits the character to create chemical reactions and develop chemical compounds ranging from drugs, to perfumes, to biopolymers like NuSkin. Chemistry can also be used to analyze chemical compounds to determine what they are.

Default: No

Skill Group: None

Specializations: Analytical, Biochemistry, Inorganic, Organic, Physical

COMPUTER (LOGIC)

Computer is the base skill for interacting with the Matrix. It represents the ability to use computers and other Matrix-connected devices. The Computer skill focuses on understanding multiple operating systems. It does not allow the character to exploit code (Hacking) or strip down mainframes (Hardware). See **Using Computer**, p. 226.

Default: Yes

Skill Group: Electronics

Specializations: By action (Edit File, Matrix Perception, Matrix Search, etc.)

CYBERCOMBAT (LOGIC)

Cybercombat is the skill used by hackers to engage in combat on the Matrix. See **Using Cybercombat**, p. 226

Default: Yes

Skill Group: Cracking

Specializations: By target type (Devices, Grids, IC, Personas, Sprites, etc.)

CYBERTECHNOLOGY (LOGIC)

Cybertechnology is the ability to create, maintain, and repair cybernetic parts. A character with the proper tools and parts may repair or even build new cybernetics. Cybertechnology is not a surgical skill. Characters cannot attach or re-attach cybernetics to organic material with this skill. This skill may be used to modify or upgrade cybernetics within cyberlimbs. See **Building and Repairing**, p. 145.

Default: No

Skill Group: Biotech

Specializations: Bodyware, Cyberlimbs, Headware, Repair

DEMOLITIONS (LOGIC)

Demolitions is used to prepare, plant, detonate, and often defuse chemical-based explosives. See **Explosives**, p. 436.

Default: Yes

Skill Group: None

Specializations: Commercial Explosives, Defusing, Improvised Explosives, Plastic Explosives

ELECTRONIC WARFARE (LOGIC)

Electronic Warfare is the basis of military signals intelligence. It governs the encoding, disruption, spoofing, and decoding of communication systems. Providing the user has the proper equipment, the skill can be used to manipulate or even take over the signal of any item's communication system. See **Using Electronic Warfare**, p. 226.

Default: No

Skill Group: Cracking

Specializations: Communications, Encryption, Jamming, Sensor Operations

FIRST AID (LOGIC)

First Aid is the ability to provide emergency medical assistance similar to that of a paramedic. This skill may be used to stabilize wounds and prevent characters from dying. First Aid cannot be used to perform surgery or repair damaged implants. For more information, see **Healing**, p. 205.

Default: Yes

Skill Group: Biotech

Specializations: By treatment (Gunshot Wounds, Resuscitation, Broken Bones, Burns, etc.)

FORGERY (LOGIC)

Forgery is used to produce counterfeit items or alter existing items to a specific purpose. Depending on the type of forgery, the forger may need specific tools or schematics to complete the task. See **Using Forgery**, p. 145.

Default: Yes

Skill Group: None

Specializations: Counterfeiting, Credstick Forgery, False ID, Image Doctoring, Paper Forgery

HACKING (LOGIC)

Hacking is used to discover and exploit security flaws in computers and other electronics. For more on how Hacking is used, see **Using Hacking**, p. 226.

Default: Yes
Skill Group: Cracking
Specializations: Devices, Files, Hosts, Personas

HARDWARE (LOGIC)

Hardware reflects a characters ability to build and repair electronic devices. A workspace, proper materials, and sufficient build time are required to enact a repair or to build a new device. See **Building & Repairing**, at right.

Default: No
Skill Group: Electronics
Specializations: By hardware type (Commlinks, Cyberdecks, Smartguns, etc.)

INDUSTRIAL MECHANIC (LOGIC)

An industrial mechanic is tasked with repairing or modifying large-scale machines, such as assembly line equipment, power generators, HVAC units, industrial robots, etc. See **Building and Repairing**, at right.

Default: No
Skill Group: Engineering
Specializations: Electrical Power Systems, Hydraulics, HVAC, Industrial Robotics, Structural, Welding

LOCKSMITH (AGILITY)

This skill covers building, repairing, and opening mechanical and electronic locks. While largely banished to antiquity, traditional mechanical locking mechanisms are still in use around the globe, often as throwbacks or backups. Electronic locks are far more common and quite susceptible to your ministrations. See **Doors, Windows, & Locks**, p. 363.

Default: No
Skill Group: None
Specializations: By type (Combination, Keypad, Maglock, Tumbler, Voice Recognition, etc.)

MEDICINE (LOGIC)

Medicine is used to perform advanced medical procedures such as surgeries. It includes long-term medical support for disease and illness, and the skill can be used to diagnose a character's medical condition. This skill is used to implant or remove cybernetics and bioware but cannot be used to repair or maintain implanted devices. For more information, see **Healing**, p. 205.

Default: No
Skill Group: Biotech
Specializations: Cosmetic Surgery, Extended Care, Implant Surgery, Magical Health, Organ Culture, Trauma Surgery

NAUTICAL MECHANIC (LOGIC)

Nautical Mechanic is concerned with the maintenance and repair of watercraft. This skill is only effective if the necessary equipment and time are available. See **Building & Repairing** below.

Default: No
Skill Group: Engineering
Specializations: Motorboat, Sailboat, Ship, Submarine

NAVIGATION (INTUITION)

Navigation governs the use of technology and natural instinct to navigate through territory. This skill enables characters to read maps, use GPS devices, follow AR nav points, or follow a course by landmarks or general direction sense. Navigation applies to both AR and non-AR-enhanced environments.

Default: Yes
Skill Group: Outdoors
Specializations: Augmented Reality Markers, Celestial, Compass, Maps, GPS

SOFTWARE (LOGIC)

Software is the skill used to create and manipulate programming in the Matrix. See **Using Software**, p. 226. It's also what technomancers use when they create their complex forms (**Threading**, p. 251).

Default: No
Skill Group: Electronics
Specializations: Data Bombs or by complex form (Editor, Resonance Spike, Tattletale, etc.)

BUILDING & REPAIRING

Building or repairing an object is an Extended Test that the gamemaster may decide requires certain tools or facilities. Modifiers from the **Build/Repair Table** (p. 146) should be applied to the test. Characters electing to design new items must have the appropriate Knowledge skills to conceptualize and create schematics.

The gamemaster assigns a threshold and interval for the Extended Test using the Task Difficulty Threshold table and Extended Test Thresholds table on p. 48.

USING FORGERY

Talented forgers can simulate anything from a signature to a credstick to the Mona Lisa. The skill is most often used for doctoring hardcopy IDs, signatures, and official paperwork, but it can be used to fabricate anything you can imagine and your skill level can handle.

Creating a forgery is a Forgery + Logic Test. The limit for this test is either Physical (for forged art, signatures,

EXAMPLE

If you can't beat 'em, sabotage 'em. At least, that must've been what the Ancients were thinking when they jammed up Zero's bike three hours before the race. The good news is, Tumbler lent him a state-of-the-art facility (+1 dice), complete with AR-assisted schematics (+2 dice) and top-notch parts (+1 dice). The bad news is his bike took serious damage (a Hard repair with an 18 threshold), but putting the bike back together is an Average task (an interval of 30 minutes). Unless he gets the work done in under three hours, Zero's going to miss the race. That means the local Triad will call in their marker and a busted bike will be the least of Zero's troubles.

Zero rolls his Automotive Mechanic 4 + Logic 3. Modifiers give him 3 more dice to use, bringing the total to 10. He rolls 4 hits in the first interval and 5 more in the second. It's been an hour and Zero is starting to worry. In the next two tests, he manages 3 and 4 hits, making a total of 16 hits. He only needs two more in the next half hour to make it to the race …

BUILD/REPAIR TABLE

SITUATION	POOL MODIFIER
Working Conditions	
Distracting	–1
Poor	–2
Bad	–3
Terrible	–4
Superior	+1
Tools and/or Parts Are:	
Inadequate	–2
Unavailable	–4 or not allowed
Superior	+1 or more
Plans/Reference Materials:	
Available	+1
Augmented Reality Enhanced	+2
Working from Memory	
Logic 5+	+0
Logic 1–4	–(5 – Logic)

and other physical objects) or Mental (for credsticks, documents, and other items that are more data than substance). Your dice pool is adjusted by appropriate modifiers (see the Build/Repair Table for suggestions), and given a time requirement by the gamemaster (an interval from the Extended Test Difficulties table is fine).

The quality of the forgery is based on the number of hits scored on the test. This number acts as the threshold for attempts to spot the fake. Anyone examining a forgery makes an Opposed Test using a Perception + Intuition [Mental] Test or Forgery + Intuition [Mental] Test. If they score as many or more hits than the quality of the forgery, the item is exposed as a fake.

Data-based forgeries, like credsticks, documents, and SINs, don't really hold up well to scrutiny, what with information being so readily available. They can appear almost identical to the original, but any attempt to get it to act like the original (transfer nuyen, pass a SIN check, etc.) reveals the forgery.

USING NAVIGATION

Since the advent of AR mapping, a walk through the sprawl never requires a test, but getting from A to B can be a lot tougher when the Matrix isn't pointing the way. Navigation tests are required when you're traversing unmarked or highly unfamiliar terrain, such as someone new to Seattle attempting to navigate the Ork Underground. It's a Simple Navigation + Intuition [Mental] Test, with a threshold based on the terrain, taking into account modifiers for environmental factors such as poor visibility, landmarks, existing trails, advice from locals, and so on—your gamemaster will give you a threshold based on the **Success Test Thresholds** table on p. 45.

VEHICLE SKILLS

Vehicle skills are used for driving and performing combat maneuvers with vehicles (see **Vehicles**, p. 198). Unless otherwise noted, Vehicle skills are linked to Reaction.

GUNNERY (AGILITY)

Gunnery is used when firing any vehicle-mounted weapon, regardless of how or where the weapon is mounted. This skill extends to manual and sensor-enhanced gunnery.

Default: Yes

Skill Group: None

Specializations: Artillery, Ballistic, Energy, Guided Missile, Rocket

PILOT AEROSPACE

Aerospace vehicles include all reduced- and zero-gravity aircraft capable of suborbital or extra-orbital flight.

Default: No

Skill Group: None

Specializations: Deep Space, Launch Craft, Remote Operation, Semiballistic, Suborbital

PILOT AIRCRAFT

This skill is used to pilot any manned or unmanned aircraft operating solely within planetary atmosphere.

Default: No

Skill Group: None

Specializations: Fixed-Wing, Lighter-Than-Air, Remote Operation, Rotary Wing, Tilt Wing, Vectored Thrust

PILOT WALKER

Any vehicle that walks on two or more legs is piloted through this skill. Characters may control the walker physically or remotely.

Default: No

Skill Group: None

Specializations: Biped, Multiped, Quadruped, Remote

PILOT EXOTIC VEHICLE (SPECIFIC)

Characters must take this skill one time for each specific exotic vehicle. Characters may control the vehicle remotely with this skill where possible.

Default: No

Skill Group: None

Specializations: N/A

PILOT GROUND CRAFT

This skill is used to pilot any ground-based vehicle, excluding legged vehicles. This skill applies whether the pilot is in the vehicle or controlling the vehicle via remote access.

Default: Yes

Skill Group: None

Specializations: Bike, Hovercraft, Remote Operation, Tracked, Wheeled

PILOT WATERCRAFT

This skill is used to pilot any waterborne vehicle, whether from inside it or by remote control.

Default: Yes

Skill Group: None

Specializations: Hydrofoil, Motorboat, Remote Operation, Sail, Ship, Submarine

DEVISING NEW ACTIVE SKILLS

While thorough, the *Shadowrun* skill system does not cover every active skill a runner may find use for. New skills may be introduced by the gamemaster, providing the new skill is called for and presently unaccounted for by the system. New Active skills should not be introduced on a character-by-character basis, but only if a clear need for that skill can be established. Once these conditions are met, the gamemaster must decide what attribute to link the skill to, what skill group, if any, to join it with, and whether or not the skill can be defaulted (see **Defaulting**, p. 130).

As a rule, new *Shadowrun* skills should be broad enough that there is room for multiple specializations.

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS

Knowledge skills fall into four categories: Street, Academic, Professional, and Interests. Each category presents an opportunity to shape the experiences of a character far beyond what happens on a run. Knowledge skills do not affect tests the way Active skills do. In certain cases Knowledge skills may provide the background needed to complete an action, but they typically do not provide dice for Active skill tests.

You get a number of free Knowledge skill points at character creation. Skill advancement and additional Knowledge skills follow the skill advancement rules (**Character Advancement**, p. 103).

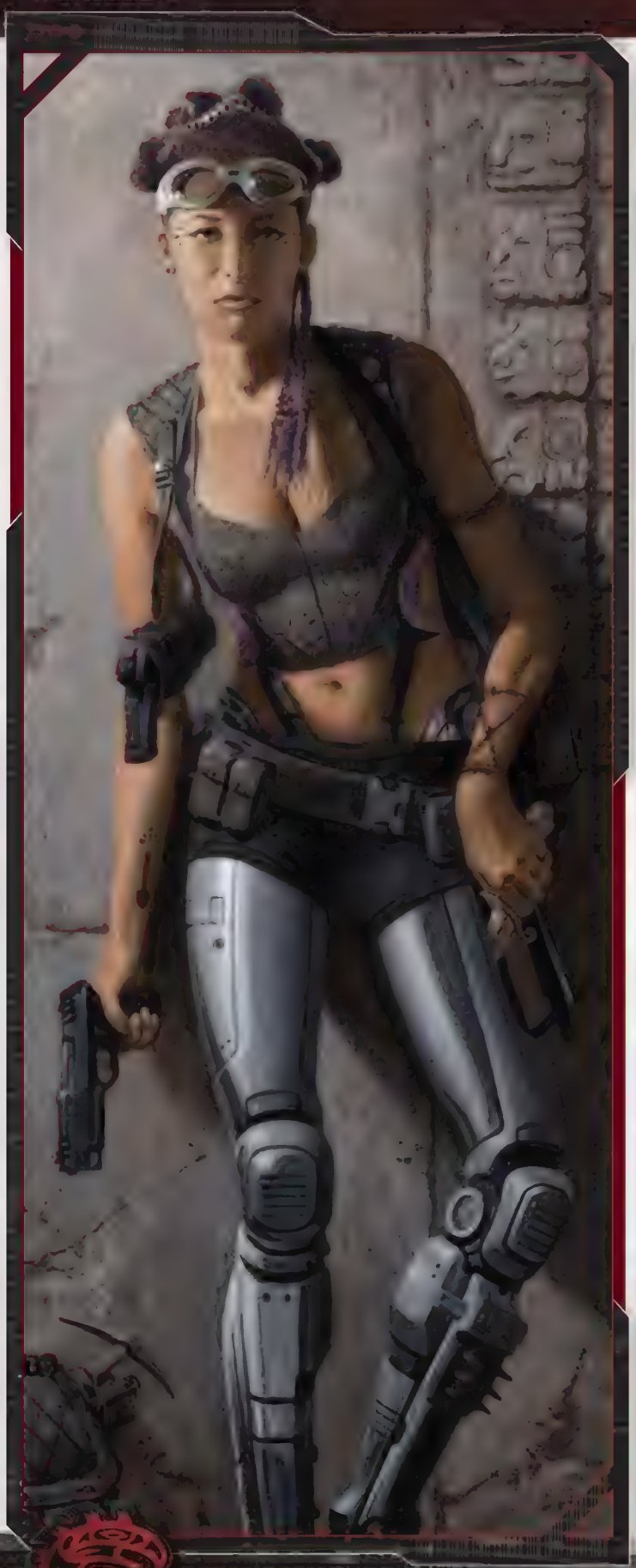
CHOOSING KNOWLEDGE SKILLS

Knowledge skills complement your character. They create meaning and history behind the Active skills and abilities you choose. *Shadowrun* gives you some room to play with Knowledge skills. You're free to take practically any Knowledge skill your can think up for your character.

Knowledge skills are meant to represent a limited set of knowledge the character could have gained in some in-game fashion. For example, a kid growing up in an Evo corporate enclave could have a skill in Corporate Culture. On the other hand, had she tried to take Culture as a Knowledge skill, it would have been way too broad to be a Knowledge skill and her gamemaster would have told her she needs to narrow it down a bit. Check out the Knowledge Skill Examples on p. 149 to get a good idea about how to hit the Knowledge skill sweet spot.

KNOWLEDGE AND IMAGINATION

Knowledge skills really round out a character. Imagine two street samurai, identical in every Active skill, attribute, and piece of gear. One of them has a list of Knowledge skills that include Farming, Tribal Dances, and Tobacco, while the other one has a list including Breakdancing, Neo-House Music, and Dive Bars. We bet you can pick one you'd rather hang out with. Even though everything else about them is identical, their Knowledge skills set them apart.



KNOWLEDGE SKILL SPECIALIZATIONS

Specializations are designed to narrow a field of knowledge to a specific and limited subset. For example, the same corp kid with Corporate Culture could specialize her skill in Corporate Culture (Evo) for the specialization bonus when she's dealing with Evo. Specializations narrow the aperture, but not so far that the Knowledge skill becomes too specific. A specialization of Corporate Culture (Evo Social Culture of the Upper-Echelon Jet Set in the 18-25 Age Bracket) would be way too specific. The goal is for the skill to speak to the unique background of the character but remain useful.

STREET KNOWLEDGE

Street Knowledge is linked to Intuition. This type of Knowledge skill is about knowing the movers and shakers in an urban area, along with how things get done on the street. You know about the people who live in different neighborhoods, who to ask to get what, and where things are. The information that these skills cover tends to change rapidly, but your instincts help you keep up.

ACADEMIC KNOWLEDGE

Academic knowledge is linked to Logic. This type of knowledge includes university subjects such as history, science, design, technology, magical theory, and the people and organizations with fingers in those pies. The humanities (cultures, art, philosophy, and so on) are also included in this category.

PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE

Professional Knowledge skills deal with subjects related to normal trades, professions, and occupations, things like journalism, engineering, business, and so on. You might find them helpful when doing legwork for a run, especially those in the corporate world. All Professional Knowledge skills are linked to Logic.

INTERESTS

Strange as it might sound, you might have some hobbies outside of slinging mana and bullets. Interests are the kind of Knowledge skill that describes what you know because of what you do for fun. There are no guidelines (and no limit) to the sort of interest skills you can have. Interest Knowledge skills are linked to Intuition.

USING KNOWLEDGE SKILLS

Knowledge skills are about what the character knows, even if you, the player, don't. Check out the Knowledge

Skill Table for a few guidelines on what a skill reveals. Keep in mind that general facts, such as the name of the head of a megacorp and such, is info that can be quickly found on the Matrix. Knowledge skills are not about that basic level of detail, but rather information that not everyone knows or can find so easily.

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS

CHARACTER SEEKS	THRESHOLD
General Knowledge	1
Detailed Knowledge	2
Intricate Knowledge	4
Obscure Knowledge	6+

EXAMPLE

Kai-lin knows he's seen that face before. The man is older now, heavier in the jowls, but definitely someone he knows. The cut of the fat man's suit reads corporate, and Kai-lin knows Seattle's corporate Mr. Johnsons (Corporate Johnsons 8). The gamemaster, of course, knows exactly why Kai-lin recognizes the man. He sets the threshold at 4, because it's been years since the Johnson worked Seattle. Kai-lin gets 3 hits. It isn't enough to remember the name, but it's enough to remember that the guy worked for Aztechnology, which always spells trouble.

A FEW KNOWLEDGE SKILL EXAMPLES

If a picture is worth a thousand words, examples have to be worth a couple hundred, right? So here you go.

STREET SKILL EXAMPLES	SPECIALIZATION EXAMPLES
Seattle Street Gangs	Halloweeners, Ancients, Brain Eaters, 405 Hellhounds
UCAS Politics	Congressional, Presidential, by state, by lobby group, by political party
Ares Macrotechnology	Damien Knight, AresSpace, Ares Arms, Seattle Operations
Hong Kong Triads	Yellow Lotus, Red Dragons, Black Chrysanthemums
Security Companies	Lone Star, Knight Errant, Hard Corps, Seattle Sec Corps
Sprawl Life	Soup Kitchens, Scavenging, Street Docs, Squats

ACADEMIC SKILL EXAMPLES	SPECIALIZATION EXAMPLES
History	By region (American, European, Asian, etc.), by era (Ancient, Medieval, Modern)
Literature	Japanese, Early Twentieth Century, Genre (Sci-Fi, Poetry, Fiction, Romance)
Economics	Micro-economics, Macro-economics
Biology	Anatomy, Microbiology, Parazoology, Physiology
Chemistry	Industrial Chemicals, Inorganic Chemistry, Organic Chemistry, Pharmaceuticals

PROFESSIONAL SKILL EXAMPLES	SPECIALIZATION EXAMPLES
Architecture	Commercial, Residential, by style (Baroque, Brutalist, Art Nouveau)
Business	Finance, Distribution, Manufacturing, Megacorp, Digital Accountancy, Small Business
Engineering	Chemical, Civil, Electrical, Mechanical, Nuclear
Military	Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, Special Forces
Police Procedures	By company (Ares, Aztechnology, Wuxing), Government, Military Security Design, Magical, Matrix, Military, Physical, Private, Home

INTEREST SKILL EXAMPLES	SPECIALIZATION EXAMPLES
Club Music	Astral Rock, Electron Wave, Goblin Rock, Powernoize, Rockabilly, Sinthcore, WizPunk
Matrix Games	Dawn of Atlantis III, Dragon Storm, Grand Larceny, Killing Floor, Shadowrun Online
Sports	Basketball, Combat Biking, Court Ball, Football, MMA, Soccer, Stickball, Urban Brawl
Street Drugs	BTLs, Cram, Deepweed, Novacoke, Spike, Tempo
Fashion	Harajuku Scene, London Scene, New York Scene, Paris Scene

LANGUAGE SKILLS

There are few situations where language skills should require a dice roll. Characters with a language skill don't need to make tests to understand one another in every day situations. The character's skill level serves as a benchmark for how well they can communicate in a foreign language over time. However, in critical situations where precise translation is important, a gamemaster may elect to require a Language skill test. For more information, see **Using Language Skills**, at right.

LANGUAGE (INTUITION)

Language is the ability to converse in a specific language through written and verbal means. Characters who speak multiple languages must purchase a separate language skill for each language.

Default: Yes

Skill Group: None

Specializations: Read/Write, Speak, by dialect, by lingo

LANGUAGE IN THE SIXTH WORLD

Soon after the Awakening, cultural languages experienced a renaissance, gaining more inner sprawl popularity as a result of social displacement. Despite the new global cultural diaspora, most people now grow up learning a form of English replete with pidgin terms cobbled from popular cultural languages.

New races also brought new languages to the table. From the complex and tonal sounds of the elven tongue Sperethiel to the guttural ork tones of Or'zet, any racial group that staked claim to a racial culture holds it together with the glue of language. Non-metahuman languages exist as well: linguists continue to struggle in cracking the code of languages such as Dragonspeak, Sasquatch, and Naga.

The late 21st century is defined by globalization and the omnipresent Matrix. Shadowrunners operate in an AR-enhanced world featuring corporate-based iconography as the basis of public communication. The years that followed the Awakening reshaped the definition of literacy. By 2047 technical advances in voice recognition, linguasofts, and speech-to-text-to-speech algorithms made it possible to write a business report verbally in English, have it transcribed into German and read back aloud in Japanese, all of which make it easier for corporations to reach consumers universally in an ever-shrinking digital world.

LINGOS

Lingos are informal languages formed out of a mother tongue and heavy with slang, jargon, and culturally significant metaphorical language. Lingos arise out of professional and often cultural need. For example, the Cityspeak word "wiz" came from jargon specific to the magically active. Lingos are specializations of base languages.

2075 LINGO GUIDE

NAME	MEANING
Cityspeak	A Japanese/English pidgin spoken in Seattle
Creole	A French/English hybrid spoken in the CAS
Street	Localized jive based on a city's street population
1337speak	Decker code talk
Milspec	Military jargon shared between soldiers/mercs
Corp	Technical banter shared by corporate office staff and lawyers
Orbital	Jargon shared by off-world colonies

USING LANGUAGE SKILLS

A gamemaster may elect to call for a Language Test anytime information needs to be translated hurriedly or in a tense situation. The Language Skill Table suggests thresholds for the test as well as possible modifiers. Failing a Language Test means the parties are unable to understand each other. If a glitch is rolled, some meaningful portion of the information is presumed to be understood but is actually misunderstood. The gamemaster may want to make the Language Test secretly, in order to maintain the illusion that the characters understand what is going on.

EXAMPLE

The lady at the bar is beautiful, but she doesn't speak a lick of Japanese. She greets Hiro in German. Hiro smiles at her and hopes his German 3 Knowledge skill is enough to keep up. They strike up a casual conversation. The gamemaster makes a Language Test in secret with a threshold of 1. He scores 2 hits. Hiro is understanding her. Soon, the conversation gets complex. The gamemaster makes a second test against a threshold of 2, but this time it is a glitch. Hiro thinks he hears her invite him back to her room. She did, but with the caveat that her boyfriend will be there waiting for them. Hiro is brimming with anticipation. Too bad he has no idea what he's in for …

ACTIVE SKILL LIST

For reference, these skills are listed by their linked attributes.

AGILITY	
Archery	Automatics
Blades	Clubs
Escape Artist	Exotic Melee Weapon (Specific)
Exotic Ranged Weapon (Specific)	Gunnery
Gymnastics	Heavy Weapons
Locksmith	Longarms
Palming	Pistols
Sneaking	Throwing Weapon
Unarmed Combat	
BODY	
Diving	Free-Fall
REACTION	
Pilot Aerospace	*Pilot Aircraft*
Pilot Walker	*Pilot Exotic Vehicle (Specific)*
Pilot Ground Craft	Pilot Watercraft
STRENGTH	
Running	Swimming
CHARISMA	
Con	Etiquette
Instruction	Intimidation
Leadership	Negotiation
Performance	Impersonation
Animal Handling	
INTUITION	
Artisan	*Assensing*
Disguise	Interests Knowledge
Language	Navigation
Perception	Street Knowledge
Tracking	
LOGIC	
Academic Knowledge	*Aeronautics Mechanics*
Arcane	Armorer
Automotive Mechanic	*Biotechnology*
Chemistry	Computer
Cybertechnology	Cybercombat
Demolitions	*Electronic Warfare*
First Aid	*Industrial Mechanics*
Hacking	*Hardware*
Medicine	*Nautical Mechanics*
Professional Knowledge	*Software*
Forgery	

LANGUAGE SKILL TABLE

SITUATION	THRESHOLD
Universal concept (hunger, fear, bodily function)	1
Basic conversation (concerns of daily life)	1
Complex subject (special/limited interest topics)	2
Intricate subjects (almost any technical subject)	3
Obscure subject (very technical/rare knowledge)	4

SITUATION	DICE POOL MODIFIER
Speaking lingo (or variation of particular language)	-1
Using augmented reality visual display help	+1 to +4

SOCIAL SKILLS AND LANGUAGE

When using Social skills in a foreign language, the language barrier hinders your charms. You can't add more dice from your Social skill than you have in the language you (attempt to) speak. So if Easy Sal knows he can squeeze a few more nuyen out of Mr. Brackhaus if he can communicate clearly with the man, and Sal's Negotiation is 6 but his German is only 3, Sal can only use 3 skill dice to worm more money out of the man.

ACTIVE SKILL LIST, CONT.

WILLPOWER	
Astral Combat	Survival
MAGIC	
Alchemy	*Banishing*
Binding	*Counterspelling*
Ritual Spellcasting	*Spellcasting*
Summoning	*Enchanting*
Disenchanting	
RESONANCE	
Compiling	*Decompiling*
Registering	

Note: You cannot default on *Italicized* skills.

USING ATTRIBUTES

The *Shadowrun* skill system is designed to be broad in order to account for as many actions as possible. There may be occasions, though, where natural abilities are the closest matching proficiency to a given test. For example, if a dozen beast spirits were to suddenly materialize, claws probing the air for prey, there is not a skill to help you avoid soiling yourself. However, Charisma (strength of character) and Willpower (mental fortitude) are great for seeing if you maintain some sense of composure in the face of certain death.

ATTRIBUTE-ONLY TESTS

The gamemaster decides when an attribute-only test is called for and what attributes to apply. Attribute-only tests pair two attributes together to form a dice pool, although there may be some situations where only one attribute applies. Here are a few attribute-only pairings built to suit situations where no skill suffices.

COMPOSURE (CHA + WIL)

Some situations are tough to deal with, even for hardened professionals like shadowrunners. When a character is faced with an emotionally overwhelming situation there are only two choices. Stay and fight or turn into a quivering lump of goo. To find out which one happens, make a Willpower + Charisma Test, with a threshold based on the severity of the situation.Take note that repeating similar situations over and again eventually eliminates the need to perform this test. Staring down a group of well-armed gangers will be scary at first, but after a character does it a few times the fear gives way to instinct.

JUDGE INTENTIONS (CHA + INT)

Reading another person is also a matter of instinct. A character can use their instincts to guess at the intentions of another person or to gauge how much they can trust someone. Make an Opposed Intuition + Charisma Test against the target's Willpower + Charisma. This is not an exact science. A successful test doesn't mean the target will never betray you (intentions have been known to change), and deceptive characters can gain another's confidence easily. This primarily serves as a benchmark or gut instinct about how much you can trust the person you are dealing with.

LIFTING/CARRYING (BOD + STR)

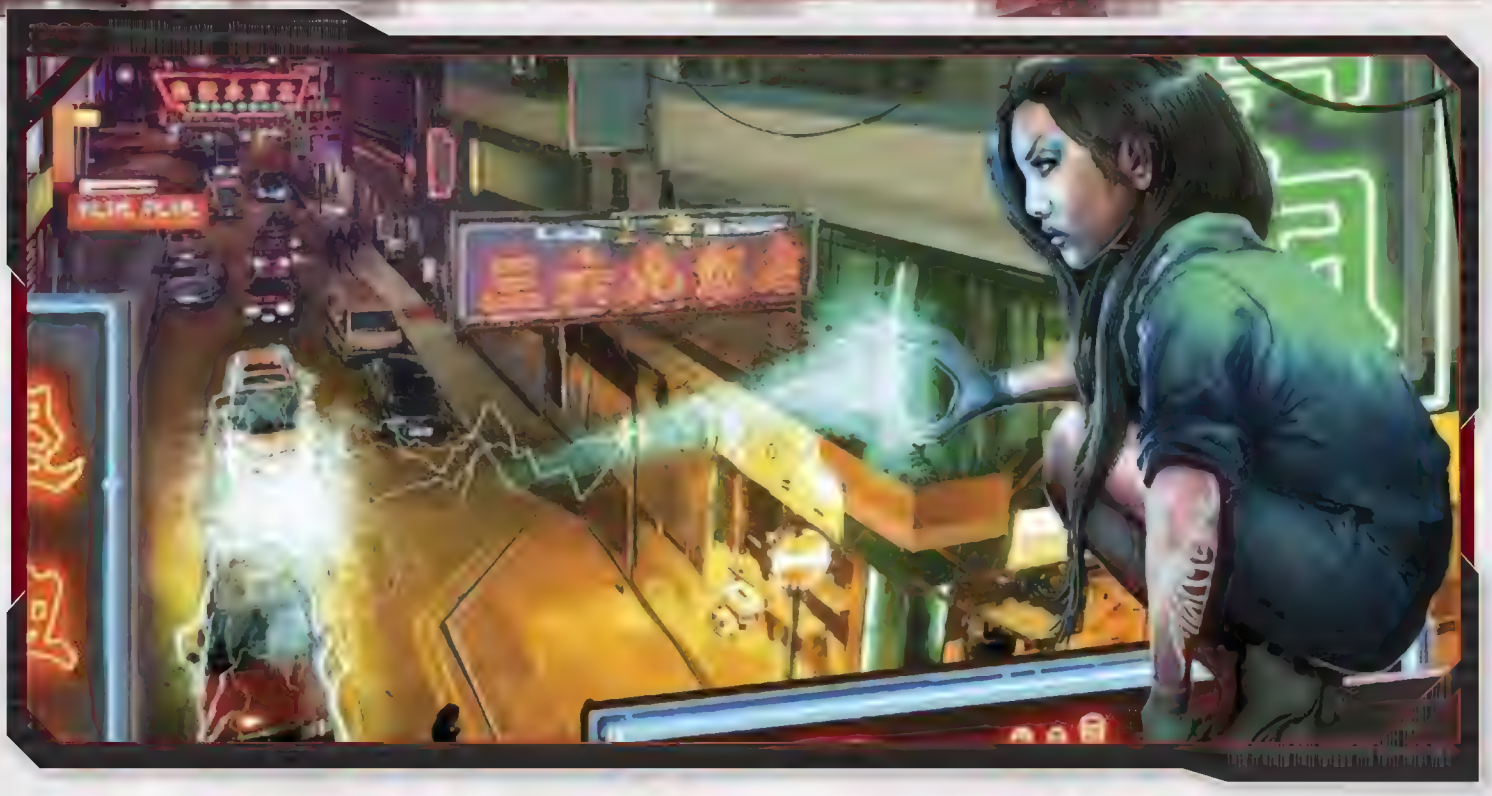
The baseline for lifting weight is 15 kilograms per point of Strength. Anything more than that requires a Strength + Body Test. Each hit increases the max weight lifted by 15 kilograms. Lifting weight above your head, as with a clean & jerk, is more difficult. The baseline for lifting weight above the head is 5 kilograms per point Strength. Each hit on the Lifting Test increases the maximum weight you can lift by 5 kilograms.

Carrying weight is significantly different than lifting weight. Characters can carry Strength x 10 kilograms in gear without effort. Additional weight requires a Lifting Test. Each hit increases the maximum by 10 kilograms. For more details on carrying gear, see **Carrying Gear**, p. 420.

MEMORY (LOG + WIL)

While there are numerous mnemonic devices, and even a few select pieces of bioware, designed for remembering information, memory is not a skill. If a character needs to recall information make a Logic + Willpower Test. Use the Knowledge Skill Table to determine the threshold. If a character actively tries to memorize information, make a Logic + Willpower Test at the time of memorization. Each hit adds a dice to the Recall Test later on.

Glitches can have a devastating effect on memory. A glitch means the character misremembers some portion of the information, such as order of numbers in a passcode. A critical glitch means the character has completely fooled himself into believing and thus remembering something that never actually happened.



SKILL GROUPS

ACTING
Con
Impersonation
Performance

ATHLETICS
Gymnastics
Running
Swimming

BIOTECH
Biotechnology
Cybertechnology
First Aid
Medicine

CLOSE COMBAT
Blades
Clubs
Unarmed Combat

CONJURING
Banishing
Binding
Summoning

CRACKING
Cybercombat
Electronic Warfare
Hacking

ELECTRONICS
Computer
Hardware
Software

ENCHANTING
Alchemy
Artificing
Disenchanting

ENGINEERING
Aeronautics Mechanic
Automotive Mechanic
Industrial Mechanic
Nautical Mechanic

FIREARMS
Automatics
Longarms
Pistols

INFLUENCE
Etiquette
Leadership
Negotiation

OUTDOORS
Navigation
Survival
Tracking

SORCERY
Counterspelling
Ritual Spellcasting
Spellcasting

STEALTH
Disguise
Palming
Sneaking

TASKING
Compiling
Decompiling
Registering

WHERE THERE'S SMOKE

"They'll park right there." The girl said and pointed along a line of artificial trees, sunken into the street like signposts of failed environmentalism, to a brick-faced cyber clinic called Executive Body Enhancements.

"Tell me you're sure about this, bug." Charlie Broken Horse said.

Ladybug rolled her eyes; the action unconsciously shifted her heavy eye makeup from purple to deep red. She was hardly tall enough to see over the steering wheel of her Porsche Aguilar. Ladybug couldn't have been more than one-and-a-half meters, maybe 45 kilos if you counted all the gear she was packing. She looked like a girl scout on the way to a camping trip or a tech repairman's sidekick. She would have resented both comparisons.

"I only nicked two spotter drones to run interference and a third is orbiting for coverage," the hacker said. "I'll still be able still handle the limo and take out the driver."

"No, I mean are you sure this is the guy?"

She folded her arms. "Riser tailed this guy for weeks. He had me checking into all his financials as well as doing detailed cyber-surveillance on every fragging step he took outside the NeoNET Tower. The last ping Riser sent was less than ten meters from this guy. What does that tell you?"

"It means he was close, but are we sure we know why? Riser hasn't exactly been himself lately, you know?"

"I don't care if he's been the frakking Queen of England. He was close to this guy when he went dark, so this is where we look."

And there was no question that they would look. Their friend and partner had been working a case when he went missing, and that wasn't something you let slide. They didn't know what the job he had been working on involved or any details about it at all; they just knew that now that he was gone, it was their job to find him.

The adept tried to stretch out in the passenger seat, but every movement found him wedged up against some part of the car's interior. He didn't know how much longer he could sit inside the cramped Aguilar, but his punker gear and traditional Sioux war paint meant he couldn't wait outside the car. There were some parts of town where he could get away with a look like that and not be noticed at all, but this wasn't one of them.

BY MALIK TOMS

"Remember where we are," Ladybug said. "In Bellevue, police response will be under three minutes from the moment you pull your gun. We need to be gone by then."

He nodded, studying the street and nearby clinic. Vashon Island was the fashion of the day. Pedestrians strolled along in groups and pairs taking in the wash of neon signage and flashing AROs glaring above their heads. A limousine slipped out of the queue and eased to a stop in front of Executive Body Enhancements. Two Centurion Security officers flanked the doorway, faces blank like good security guards should be. They stepped forward at the sight of the vehicle. The limo doors opened, and an attractive blond woman stepped out under the cover of a red umbrella. Charlie tensed and reached for the door.

Ladybug said, "Drek, that's Katherine Mya Rodriguez! You know, the one who played Maria Mercurial in those sims! She must get work done here too."

Charlie was more interested in the security. He watched the officers move out past the first set of double doors to meet the client. The outer doors were made of clear ballistic glass, virtually bulletproof. They snapped shut behind the client, and a second set of doors opened. Charlie knew this type of system was popular in high-end cyber clinics. In addition to being an important security protocol designed to lock out unwanted elements, the space between the doors circulated air through a purifier system, making it a bacterial buffer zone. Charlie started to say something, but Ladybug cut him off.

"Tying my shoes is harder than slaving those doors to stay open or shut. It won't be a problem."

He smiled and relaxed. But only a little.

Ladybug still looked tense. She furrowed her brow and said, "I'm not sure how I feel about doing this without the rest of the Smokers."

"Plus ça change, little bug," Charlie said. "Or as my people say it, everything the power does, it does in a circle."

Even before Riser disappeared, things between the members of the infamous Smokers Club were falling apart. Kai-lin was doing more and more solo work for the Yakuza. Seta had walked into a DIMR office and asked for a job. Thanks to a positive recommendation from Tommy Talon, she actually got one. They hadn't heard from their mage since.

Ladybug sighed. She pulled her knees up against her chest. "Change sucks. I want things to be the way they were."

"At which point?"

"Before all this." They watched the limousine pull away from the curb. Its tires pushed dirty water down the crowded street.

"How far back do you want to go? Before the resonance found you? Before Hestaby went into exile, or Dunkehlzahn was assassinated? Or are you talking about even further back, before we knew what UGE was, when you were in diapers and I was getting my ass kicked for saying I saw spirits? Are those the good old days you want?" He shook his head, then spat to one side. "The past is never as good as we remember it, bug."

Despite that little monologue, part of him agreed with her. Too many of the people he'd started running with were dead or out of the biz. He was getting older and the shadows darker. He'd grown used to things being one way, and suddenly they weren't that way anymore. Some people get scared and overreact when that happens. They fight against the change. Charlie had seen enough change come and go that he knew he couldn't stop it. He just tried to keep it from killing him. With Riser missing and the Smokers scattered like ash, the only constant he could count on was the power of the megacorps. No matter how much the shadows changed, they would always be up there, filling the sky and blotting out the light. That meant there would always be work for people like him.

"The point is," he said, hoping Ladybug didn't notice his pause for thought, "you can't let yesterday use up too much of today."

Ladybug snorted. "Is that another one the things your people say?"

"The Cherokee, actually. But who keeps track?"

She rolled her eyes, and her makeup shifted to green.

"My spotters just locked on to his limo, so if you're getting cold feet about this run, you better get over it real quick."

Moments later a Mitsubishi Nightsky rolled to a stop in front of the clinic. As before, the guards walked into the street to meet the client. The first person to step out was a troll bodyguard who looked like he knew how to handle himself. Charlie waited a second longer. He wanted to see the target's face. If he was lucky, Dr. Eric Leiden had all the answers Charlie needed. The scientist, the MFIC, climbed out of the Nightsky last. He was basketball tall and skeleton thin. A black suit and raincoat hung loosely on his frame. Lieden's pasty skin and hair seemed better suited for a vampire than a man.

Charlie popped open the Aguilar's door and said, "Stay put until—"

"I know the plan, chummer."

He gave her shoulder a re-assuring squeeze and slid out of the Aguilar, falling into step behind a group of pedestrians moving in the direction of the clinic. When he was close enough, he broke into a jog. Charlie hit the open outer doors just as the inner doors slammed shut. The guards turned toward him, cyberware making their motions into a blur. But they still weren't fast enough. Mana pushed his body faster than wires could. He caught the first guard as he raised his pistol, sidestepped and redirected the man's shot toward the troll.

And caught him in the kneecap. The troll yowled in pain and fell back against the wall.

The adept used his leverage to continue the natural motion and forced the pistol up and into the chin of the second guard. Metal connected with bone, and the pistol barked again.

Charlie kept moving. He jammed two fingers into the remaining guard's wrist, forcing the pistol from his numb fingers. A quick strike to the lower ribs disrupted his diaphragm, and a second blow to the solar plexus buckled his knees.

The adept yanked out his own Browning pistol and turned it on the suited man. "Word has it you're the sonuvabitch in charge." Charlie jammed the gun into the suit's chest. "I want answers."

Charlie grabbed the scientist by the shoulder and turned him towards the limo where he hoped Ladybug was at work incapacitating the driver. He pulled back the hammer of his pistol and asked the frightened man, "Where is Riser?!"

The look on the scientist's face was a mixture of fear and confusion. It wasn't what Charlie expected. It definitely wasn't what he wanted to see. He swung the flat side of the pistol across the man's face hard enough to draw blood and then asked the question again.

"I don't know who that is!" the scientist said, his tongue struggling to get the words out clearly.

That's when Charlie heard the grumbling.

At first it sounded like the troll was mumbling to himself. He looked like he was trying to stand up, using the wall for balance, pushing himself off the floor with his good leg, but he was too shaky to make much progress. Charlie stared a moment longer. It finally occurred to him that the troll wasn't armed. He wasn't making much progress, but he was still mumbling. Charlie felt the air around him grow still and moist. He shifted his vision, moving between realities in a blink. The physical world dulled to grey, and the bright contrasts of the magical world flared up around him. In astral space the troll glowed like fire.

"Drek." He barely had time to breathe the curse before a manabolt twisted in his gut. His own damn fault—he should have checked if the bodyguard was Awakened as soon as he saw him. He staggered, recovered, and raised his pistol to fire. Then the air was twisting, coalescing into something large, something amorphous, something wet that filled the entire entryway. It was a water elemental, and it surged forward, enveloping Charlie and casting him helplessly through the door. He bounced off the Nightsky limousine, and his pistol skittered across the pavement. No matter—the gun was useless against the advancing spirit. Charlie arched his back and flipped up to his feet. He sank into a fighter's crouch, measuring this new opponent. He would have to rely on his hands, but that usually was enough.

The elemental had taken the shape of a pillar of waves. Chains dangled from its elongated arms, and its hands ended in sharp claws that were darting toward his face. Charlie ducked and rolled. He knew the troll was still moving, perhaps working on another spell, but he couldn't take his attention off the spirit.

The spirit lunged, and Charlie spun backwards with exact timing, dancing just out of reach. It almost didn't work—the spirit was sick fast. The manabolt was slowing Charlie down, and he couldn't stay clear of the spirit much longer. If he kept dancing around, he would lose. He needed this over, fast.

Charlie reached down into himself and grabbed hold of all the anger buried inside him. He thought about change, and loss, and the fear he wore like a mantle, and he carried the force of all of it up into his chest and through his arm. His fist carved through air and mana, blasting into the spirit. He felt the spirit's form give way. Its head came apart against the ridge of Charlie Broken Horse's fist, and the adept roared.

Charlie stumbled forward, thrown off balance by the sheer power of the blow. The troll mage was still there, reaching for him and mumbling. He braced himself against the impact of a second manabolt because he couldn't stop the mage from casting it.

The force of the spell sent Charlie to his knees. His stomach lurched, and he felt his knees buckling. If he was hit by a third manabolt, the pain would overwhelm him.

Two gunshots split the air. The troll's eyes rolled back in his head as he toppled over. Ladybug leaned over the hood of the Nightsky, firing three more times into the troll to be sure. "Lone Star is on the way. Get him in the fragging car, Charlie!"

Charlie offered a weak thumbs up. He climbed to his feet and scanned for Dr. Lieden. The good doctor appeared to be rooted in place. His head swung back and forth between the downed troll and bloody security men slumped in the entrance. He had Charlie's gun in his hands, and he knew enough about weapons to spread his legs into a shooter's stance. He raised the barrel of the gun toward Charlie and screamed, "What do you people want from me?!"

Charlie lunged towards his target. He met the scientist's wide eyes and saw fear there. The man tried to squeeze the trigger. Nothing happened. The man tried again and again until Charlie snatched the pistol out of his hand.

"Biometric safety." Charlie said as he grabbed him by the shoulder and tossed him in the back of the limo. The adept wiped the blood from his mouth. "Now, let's all calm down so I have a chance to tell you what I want and you have a chance to give it to me."

If he found Riser—*when* he found Riser—he'd make sure his boss knew what he went through to track him down.

COMBAT

In the world of *Shadowrun,* combat is an inevitability. At some point the talker will run out of words, the sneaker will get spotted, and the fight will be on. Shooting, stabbing, blowing things up, drive-bys, car chases, breaking things, and healing wounds will be covered in this chapter.

THE BASICS

Shadowrun assumes we're all past the "I shot you!"—"You missed me!" arguments of childhood. Combat is governed by rules and procedures designed to keep the action clear and flowing. In *Shadowrun* everyone in the game quickly learns whether your axe-toting troll whacks the obnoxious elf ganger or if that elf is just too damn fast. We'll open up the Combat rules lessons with the basics: Who goes first? Where can I go? What can I do? Then we'll ground you in the general concepts you'll need to understand before we get into the more in-depth stuff.

COMBAT TURN SEQUENCE

Things happen fast in combat. To keep those things straight, *Shadowrun* breaks each encounter into three-second chunks called **Combat Turns** (20 Combat Turns = 1 minute). Each Combat Turn follows a set sequence to resolve issues such as who acts first, who's faster on the draw, what happens when one character punches another, and so on. During the Combat Turn, players act in an order determined by their Initiative Score (see p. 159); each player describes their character's action, then rolls dice to see how well the character performs. The gamemaster describes the actions and reactions of the non-player characters, as well as the final outcome of all actions.

Combat Turns are broken up into a series of **Initiative Passes**, which are further broken down into **Action Phases** allowing player characters (PC) and non-player characters (NPC) to take actions sequentially during the Combat Turn. This allows combat to flow smoothly from character to character without clogging up on the actions of a single player. Things can happen quickly; one of the gamemaster's jobs is to keep players engaged and ready for their next Action Phase.

The Combat Turn plays out as follows:

1. ROLL INITIATIVE

Determine Initiative Scores for all the characters, critters, spirits, sprites, intrusion countermeasures (IC), and anything else involved in the fight (see **Initiative**, p. 159). The order in which things happen during the Combat Turn is determined by Initiative Scores, going from highest first to lowest last. Initiative is fluid and changes both within a Combat Turn and between Combat Turns.

Note that wound modifiers affect the Initiative Score (see **Changing Initiative**, p. 160) as soon as the wound is inflicted.

2. BEGIN INITIATIVE PASS

The character with the highest Initiative Score in the combat takes their Action Phase first. This character is the acting character.

If more than one character has the same Initiative Score, compare Attributes according to **Initiative Score** (p. 159) to determine who acts first. Alternatively, the gamemaster can simply determine that all actions occur simultaneously.

3. BEGIN ACTION PHASE

The acting character declares and takes his actions, according to the steps below.

If another character has delayed an action (see **Delaying Actions**, p. 161) and wants to act during this Action Phase, he must declare it here. That character chooses whether to act before, after, or at the same time as the current acting character.

3A. DECLARE ACTIONS

The acting character declares his actions for the Action Phase. He may take two Simple Actions or one Complex Action during his Action Phase. Action types are further detailed in the **Actions** section (p. 163). Alternately, the character can choose to delay his action until a lower Initiative Score in that Combat Turn (see **Delaying Actions**, p. 161).

The character may also declare one Free Action during each Action Phase in the Combat Turn. Likewise, any character who has already acted in the Combat Turn

prior to this Action Phase and still has his Free Action left may declare it at this point if he chooses.

3B. RESOLVE ACTIONS

Resolve the actions of the acting character.

4. DECLARE & RESOLVE ACTIONS OF REMAINING CHARACTERS

Once the character with the highest Initiative Score has acted, move on to the character with the next highest Initiative Score and repeat Step 3 until all characters have acted in the Initiative Pass. Once all characters have acted, subtract 10 from all characters' Initiative Scores and return to step 2 for all characters with an Initiative Score greater than 0.

If a character was wounded previously, wound modifiers may affect his Initiative Score on this and any subsequent Combat Turns.

Once all characters have an Initiative Score of 0 or less, move to Step 5.

5. BEGIN NEVV COMBAT TURN

Begin a new Combat Turn, starting again at Step 1. Continue repeating Steps 1 through 4 until the combat ends.

INITIATIVE

Initiative determines the order in which characters act, as well as how often they act during a single Combat Turn. Initiative is based on three factors: Initiative Attribute, Initiative Score, and Initiative Dice.

INITIATIVE ATTRIBUTE

The Initiative Attribute is a derived attribute used to measure the speed, perceptiveness, and reaction rate of a combatant. See the Initiative Attribute Chart to determine Initiative attributes for different types of combatants (Physical, Astral, Matrix, or Rigging) and their Base Initiative Die.

INITIATIVE SCORE

To determine a character's Initiative Score, make an Initiative Test rolling the character's Initiative Dice and adding the total to your Initiative attribute—this total is your Initiative Score. Edge may be used on this test to roll the maximum of 5D6 for a single Combat Turn. The gamemaster records the score for each character, from highest to lowest. The character with the highest score goes first and the others follow in descending order during each Initiative Pass.

If there is a tied Initiative Score use ERIC (Edge, Reaction, Intuition, Coin toss) to break the tie, comparing Attributes in that order, with the character with the higher Attribute going first. If you're still tied after comparing all three tie-breaker Attributes, flip a coin. Alternately, at the gamemaster's discretion, both characters can act simultaneously.

INITIATIVE PASSES

How many times a character can act during a Combat Turn is determined by the Initiative Test. Every character starts out with a base Initiative die of 1D6. Some characters may spend Edge or have magic or implants that increase their Initiative dice total, allowing them to roll more dice and potentially perform more actions than their non-enhanced associates.

The Combat Turn is divided into Initiative Passes. Everyone gets to act during the first Initiative Pass (in order according to their Initiative Score). At the end of each Initiative Pass the gamemaster subtracts 10 from all characters Initiative Score. Characters with an Initiative

INITIATIVE ATTRIBUTE CHART

INITIATIVE TYPE	ATTRIBUTES	BASE INITIATIVE DICE
Physical	Reaction + Intuition	1D6
Astral	Intuition x 2	2D6
Matrix: AR	Reaction + Intuition	1D6
Matrix: cold-sim VR	Data Processing + Intuition	3D6
Matrix: hot-sim VR	Data Processing + Intuition	4D6
Rigging AR	Reaction + Intuition	1D6

EXAMPLE

Saskatchewan Pete and Cayman have stumbled down the wrong alley and encountered a Halloweener who is intent on making his name by beating on a few shadowrunners. There is no room for negotiation or bargaining—the Halloweener is set on a fight. It's time to roll initiative.

Cayman has a Reaction of 4 (augmented to 6, thanks to his wired reflexes level 2) and an Intuition of 5, giving him an Initiative Rating of 11 and 3 Initiative Dice (1 base die and 2 more from his wired reflexes). Saskatchewan Pete did not get a chance to cast any of his spells yet, so he is using his regular Reaction of 3 and Intuition of 5, for an Initiative Score of 8. He has his base of 1 Initiative Die. The Halloweener has Reaction 3 (augmented to 4 thanks to wired reflexes 1) and Intuition 3, for an Initiative Rating of 7 with 2 Initiative Dice (1 base, 1 from wired reflexes).

The dice rolls go like this:

Cayman: Dice roll 11 + Initiative Rating 11 = Initiative Score 22

Saskatchewan Pete: Dice roll 2 + Initiative Rating 8 = Initiative Score 10

Halloweener: Dice roll 9 + Initiative Rating 7 = Initiative Score 16

In the first Initiative Pass, Cayman's score of 22 allows him to go first, while the Halloweener goes second with his 16. Pete's 10 makes him go third.

Score higher than 0 get to go again during a second Initiative Pass. This process is repeated until all characters have an Initiative Score of 0 or less, the Combat Turn ends, or the combat ends.

A character with an Initiative Score of 0 or less can only take one Free Action during an Initiative Pass. However, a character with 0 or less Initiative is allowed one Free Action. She can also respond to attacks by dodging or defending herself.

CHANGING INITIATIVE

In some cases, a character's Initiative Score or Base Initiative Dice may change in the middle of a Combat Turn. A player might gain Initiative by activating an augmentation, for example, or could receive a boost from a drug or spell or other enhancer. Conversely, a character who is wounded or whose vital equipment (weapon, augmentation, etc.) takes damage might lose Initiative.

If a character's Initiative attribute changes, immediately apply the difference as a positive or negative modifier to the character's Initiative Score. This new Initiative Score applies to all remaining actions in that Combat Turn. So a character with Initiative 8 and an Initiative Score of 11 who activates an implant that changes his Initiative to 10 (+2) immediately raises his Initiative Score to 13 (11 + 2).

If the number of Base Initiative Dice available to a character increases, that character immediately rolls the extra Initiative Dice and adds the sum to their current Initiative Score for that Combat Turn. So a magician with 1d6 Initiative dice who takes his first action to astrally project (2d6 Base Initiative Dice) gains the die (and the change in Initiative) for their Astral Initiative during that Combat Turn. (In this case, the magician would also replace their Reaction + Intuition for Physical Initiative with Intuition x 2 for Astral Initiative.)

If the number of Initiative Dice available to a character decreases, then that character immediately rolls the number of lost dice and subtracts the total from their Initiative Score (along with any decrease to their Initiative Attribute).

Initiative also changes when a character or NPC is injured. Wound modifiers are applied directly to the character's Initiative attribute. These changes are made immediately after the injury occurs and can affect the initiative order even within the same Initiative Pass. These changes do not allow the character to act again; they simply change their Initiative score.

If a character enters combat after it has already begun, they should roll for their Initiative Score as normal and then subtract 10 for each Initiative Pass that has already occurred. This means they may get an Action Phase during the current Combat Turn or they may not, but at least they have a chance.

EXAMPLE

Continuing the example from above, after Cayman, Pete, and the Halloweener have taken their actions, everyone subtracts 10 from their Initiative Score, leaving the following totals:

Cayman: 12

Saskatchewan Pete: 0

Halloweener: 6

This means that in the second Initiative Pass, Cayman goes first and the Halloweener goes second. Pete's score is too low to allow him another Action Phase.

The third Initiative Pass, once again subtracting 10, leads to these totals:

Cayman: 2

Halloweener: –4

Cayman is the only one who can act in this Initiative Pass—hopefully he can use his actions to bring a decisive end to the fight, because he won't have another action after this one. A new Combat Turn will start, and everyone will get a turn in the next Initiative Pass.

INITIATIVE AND EDGE

Here's what you can do with Edge to mess with initiative.

- **Seize the Initiative:** Move to the top of the initiative order, regardless of your Initiative Score. If multiple characters spend Edge to go first in the

same Combat Turn, those characters go before everybody else, in order of their Initiative Scores. The other players and NPCs then take their actions according to their Initiative Scores. This move to the top of the initiative order lasts for the entire Combat Turn (meaning multiple Initiative Passes); you return to your normal place in Initiative order at the start of the following Combat Turn.

- **Blitz:** Roll the maximum of five Initiative Dice for a single Combat Turn.

DELAYING ACTIONS

There are times when a player wants to see how others act and what happens before making his move; choosing to wait is called a Delayed Action. A Delayed Action must be declared during Step 3A of the Combat Turn Sequence (see **Declare Actions**, p. 158). A player can declare a Delayed Action on any of his Initiative Passes and can continue to delay action until a later Initiative Pass. When the character decides to act, he replaces his normal Action Phase for that Initiative Pass with the Delayed Action and then acts on an Initiative Score lower than their own.

During the Declare Actions part of that Initiative Pass, the character must declare that he is intervening at a specific Initiative Score. He can make that declaration when it is time for players with that score to act. Characters who have a Delayed Action and intervene in this manner can choose to go before, after, or at the same time as a currently acting character who would normally take his action on that Initiative Score; any actions they take receive a –1 dice pool penalty. If multiple characters delay their actions until the same Initiative Score, they break the tie in the same manner as Initiative (p. 159).

Characters delaying an action in this manner keep their initial Initiative Score. If the character does not act before the end of the Initiative Pass, they incur the standard reduction of 10 at the end of the Initiative Pass.

Players can also decide to go after the last player's Action Pass. As long as the character acts before that Initiative Pass ends and the next one begins, there is no problem. If more than one character wants to act last in a Initiative Pass, they act in the reverse order of their Initiative Scores; the character with the highest score goes last. In the event of a tie the characters must either act simultaneously or continue delaying their actions into the next Initiative Pass.

A character can delay his action into the next Initiative Pass and be the first to act. He must still use his own Initiative Score to determine the Action Phases he has for the Combat Turn.

TIMED ITEMS & INITIATIVE

Some items, such as grenades, explosive devices, timed traps, and so on, go off after a certain preset interval. In most situations, these items do what they do based on the character's current Initiative Score during the next Combat Turn. If there are no more Combat Turns, the item activates as the gamemaster sees fit.

If an item has a timer set by a player character, that character can decide for how long to set the timer, but he must declare this when the item is activated. It's usually best to have such items go off during the character's Action Phase on a predetermined Initiative Pass or at the beginning or end of a three-second Combat Turn. Timed items always go last in the case of tied Initiative Scores. In the case of radio-detonated items, the character spends their Action Phase performing a Use Item action.

EXAMPLE

Tempers have flared at a gathering of the Hellhounds gang (to no one's surprise), and the gang members have rolled initiative and are ready to start raining blows on one another. Cutter may be faster than his fellow Hellhounds, but he really wants to make a point of how well he can take a hit before dishing them out. He declares he is delaying his action on Initiative Score 13 and waits for one of the others to make a move.

PainKiller is up next in Initiative Score 11 and he wants to whale on Ash, so he takes a swing, connects, and knocks him flat. Cutter is not about to let that go unanswered, so he declares he wants to use his Delayed Action. When he makes his attack on PainKiller, he suffers a –1 dice pool penalty on his melee attack action. On the next Initiative Pass, Cutter's Initiative Score drops to 3. This means he will get a second swing at PainKiller before PainKiller goes on Initiative Score 1.

MOVEMENT

Getting from one place to another, especially from one piece of cover to another or closing the distance on an opponent, is important. Characters in *Shadowrun* have three types of movement: Walking, Running, and Sprinting.

A character's movement for an entire Combat Turn (meaning total movement for *all* Initiative Passes, not for *each* Initiative Pass) is based on their Run rate, which is determined by metatype. Walk rate determines the farthest a character can move during a Combat Turn before they are considered to be Running.

It's important to point out that "run" does not mean bolt as fast as you can; that's sprinting. Think of running as a trained combat hustle or a jog, something to get you to another point quickly but still leave you able to perform other actions, albeit with a penalty. Sprinting is exactly that, running as fast as you can from point A to point B.

STANDARD MOVEMENT (WALKING AND RUNNING)

The Movement Rates (Walk and Run) for each metatype are noted on the **Movement Table**. This is the dis-

tance the character can move during their Combat Turn. As soon as the character exceeds their Walk rate, they are considered Running until the end of the Combat Turn and incur any penalties or benefits of running. Running characters must use a Free Action in each Initiative Pass they are considered running.

Characters cannot exceed their calculated Run Rate in a Combat Turn without making a Sprinting test.

SPRINTING

Characters may attempt to increase their running distance by performing a Sprint Action during their Action Phase. In this action, they make a Running + Strength [Physical] Test. Each hit increases the distance a character can move in a Combat Turn by either 1 meter (for dwarfs and trolls) or 2 meters (for elves, humans, and orks). Characters are allowed a maximum number of Sprinting tests equal to half their Running skill per Combat Turn, minimum of 1. Sprinting characters also suffer fatigue (see **Fatigue from Running**, p. 172) if they sprint for too long.

EXAMPLE

Cutter needs to make sure he can get clear of the Zero-Zone before MCT's security goons open up with their assault rifles. He chooses to spend a Complex Action to Sprint. Cutter rolls Running + Strength [Physical] test and gets 1, 4, 5, 5, 5, 6, 6 for 5 hits. His Physical limit is only 4, though, so he's limited to 4 hits from the test. As a human those 4 hits add 2 meters per hit to his Run Rate, meaning he gets a boost of 8 meters. He adds 8 meters to his Run rate of 20 (he has Agility 5), so he can cover a total of 28 meters during this Combat Turn.

He also gains the defensive benefits of Running Modifiers, specifically Sprinting (–4), and is harder to hit when the MCT gun emplacements open fire.

RUNNING MODIFIERS

Characters who are running take a -2 dice pool modifier to all actions performed while running (except for Sprinting). Characters charging into melee combat gain a +4 dice pool modifier (making a net bonus of +2 when combined with the general penalty) when running into melee combat. Characters making a ranged attack against a running opponent suffer a -2 dice pool penalty

EXAMPLE

Wombat wants to take a quick shot and bolt for the next piece of cover. He declares his actions and fires while moving for cover 8 meters away. He has an Agility of 5, making his Walk Rate 10 meters. He makes the cover and would be considered walking on this Action Phase.

If the same cover was 11 meters away, Wombat would be considered running. On his next Action Phase Wombat can only move 2 meters before he is considered Running. His Run Rate is 20 meters, meaning he has 12 meters of movement left for the Combat Turn before he has to Sprint.

Caster, a dwarf with Agility 3, is going right after Wombat and wants to blast a guard with a quick spell while moving into cover with Wombat. Since the cover is 8 meters away and Caster's Walking rate is 6, he is considered Running. On any subsequent Initiative Passes in this Combat Turn, Caster is still considered to be Running even if he doesn't cover any more ground. He can only move another 4 meters. This Combat Turn before he has to Sprint.

METATYPE	WALK RATE	RUN RATE	SPRINT INCREASE
[illegible] Troll	Agility x 3	[illegible]	[illegible]
Elf, Human, Ork	Agility x 2	Agility x 4	+2m/hit

COMBAT ACTIONS

FREE ACTIONS	
Call a Shot	Eject Smartgun Clip
Change Linked Device Mode	Multiple Attacks
Drop Object	Run
Drop Prone	Speak/Text/Transmit Phrase
SIMPLE ACTIONS	
Activate Focus	Quick Draw
Call Spirit	Ready/Draw Weapon
Change Device Mode	Reckless Spellcasting
Command Spirit	Reload Weapon (see table)
Dismiss Spirit	Remove Clip
Fire Bow	Shift Perception
Fire Weapon (SA, SS, BF, FA)	Take Aim
Insert Clip	Take Cover
Observe in Detail	Throw Weapon
Pick Up/Put Down Object	Use Simple Device
COMPLEX ACTIONS	
Astral Projection	Melee Attack
Banish Spirit	Reload Weapon (see table)
Cast Spell	Rigger Jump In
Fire Weapon (FA)	Sprint
Fire Long or Semi-Auto Burst	Summoning
Fire Mounted or Vehicle Weapon	Use Skill
INTERRUPT ACTIONS	
Block	Hit the Dirt
Dodge	Intercept
Full Defense	Parry

to their attack test. Characters making a ranged attack against a sprinting opponent suffer a -4 dice pool modifier to their attack test.

ACTION PHASE

When a character's Action Phase arrives, she must decide what she's going to do. She has many options to choose from: fire a gun, cast a spell, activate a computer program, and so on. Each of these actions falls into one of four categories: Free, Simple, Complex, or Interrupt. During her Action Phase a character can perform two Simple Actions or one Complex Action. The character may also take one Free Action at any point in the Initiative Pass (either during her own Action Phase or at any later time). Interrupt actions are a little different as they can be taken at any time in a Combat Turn, even if it is not the acting character's Action Phase.

The **Combat Actions Table** lists common actions in each category. Note that actions possible while rigging or in the Matrix are detailed in the **Matrix** section (p. 214); magical actions are detailed in the **Magic** section (p. 276). A complete list of actions can be found at the back of this book.

When it's your turn to act, you must declare the actions that you will perform during the Action Phase. While you generally may take your actions in any order during your Action Phase, sequence can sometimes be important; like drawing your weapon before you fire it.

Many of the combat actions a character might take in *Shadowrun* are described below. Gamemasters must determine on the fly whether any action not listed that a character wants to take would be Free, Simple, or Complex by comparing it with actions that are listed and considering the effort the action would take.

Movement is declared and taken into consideration during the declare actions phase of the Action Phase. Once declared, a character cannot increase the distance they wish to move but can decrease the distance or change the direction if they run into unforeseen obstacles. The same movement penalties and bonuses apply regardless of whether the character moves their full distance.

MATRIX ACTIONS

A chart of Matrix actions is provided here for Action Type reference, but rules are located in the **Matrix** section (p. 214) of this book.

FREE ACTIONS

Free Actions are relatively simple, nearly automatic actions that require little effort to accomplish. Examples are saying a word, dropping an object, gesturing, or walking.

A character may take one Free Action during his own Action Phase or at some later point in the Initiative Pass. A character may only take a Free Action prior to his first Action Phase in the Initiative Pass if they are not surprised (see **Surprise**, p. 192). Only one Free Action is normally allowed per Initiative Pass, but multiple Free Actions could be allowed by the gamemaster if the situation seems reasonable (dropping an object and speaking a phrase).

Free Actions generally require no Success Test, though special circumstances may warrant one.

CALL A SHOT

A character may call a shot (aim for a vulnerable portion of a target) with this Free Action; see **Called Shots**, p. 178. This action must be combined with a Fire Weapon, Throw Weapon, or Melee Attack Action.

CHANGE LINKED DEVICE MODE

A character may use a Free Action to activate, deactivate, or switch the mode on any device that he is linked to by a direct neural interface through either a wired or wireless link. This includes activating cyberware, changing a smartgun's firing mode, changing a smartlinked shotgun's choke, deactivating thermographic vision, switching a commlink to hidden mode, turning a device's wireless functionality off, and so on. Note that it takes longer to interact with some devices, as noted in individual gear descriptions.

DROP OBJECT

A character may drop a held object as a Free Action. If he is holding an object in each hand, he may drop both objects as a single Free Action. At the gamemasters discretion, dropped items may suffer damage from being dropped if they are fragile or dropped in a hostile environment.

RELOADING WEAPONS

RELOADING METHOD	RESULT	TYPE OF ACTION
Removable Clip (c)	Remove or insert clip	Simple
Speed Loader	Use speed loader to completely load gun	Complex
Fill Clip	Insert (Agility) rounds into clip	Complex
Break Action (b)	Insert 2 rounds	Complex
Belt Fed (belt)	Remover or insert belt	Complex
Fill Belt/Drum	Insert (Agility) Rounds into belt/drum	Complex
Internal Magazine (m)	Insert (Agility) rounds	Complex
Muzzle-Loader (ml)	Load 1 muzzle tube	Complex
Cylinder (cy)	Insert (Agility) rounds into belt	Complex
Drum (d)	Remove or insert drum	Complex
Bow	Nock 1 arrow	Simple

MATRIX ACTIONS

FREE ACTIONS	SIMPLE ACTIONS	COMPLEX ACTIONS		
Load Program	Call/Dismiss Sprite	Break File	Erase Matrix Signature	Snoop
Switch Two Matrix Attributes	Change Icon	Brute Force	Format Device	Spoof Command
Swap Two Programs	Command Sprite	Check Overwatch Score	Grid-Hop	Trace Icon
Unload Program	Jack Out	Crack File	Hack on the Fly	Compile Sprite
	Invite Mark	Crash Program	Hide	Decompile Sprite
VARIABLE ACTIONS	Send Message	Data Spike	Jam Signals	Erase Resonance Signature
Control Device	Switch Interface Mode	Disarm Data Bomb	Jump Into Rigged Device	Kill Complex Form
Matrix Search		Edit File	Matrix Perception	Register Sprite
		Enter/Exit Host	Reboot Device	Thread Complex Form
		Erase Mark	Set Data Bomb	

DROP PRONE

A character may kneel or drop prone as a Free Action, as long as he is not surprised (see **Surprise**, p. 192). A character who is surprised may not drop prone.

EJECT SMARTGUN CLIP

A character linked to a ready smartgun may use a mental command to eject the weapon's clip. It still takes a separate Simple Action to insert a new, fresh clip (see **Smartgun System**, p. 433).

GESTURE

A character may communicate with a few quick gestures as a Free Action. Characters unfamiliar with the gestures may make an Intuition (2) Test to determine what the gesture means.

MULTIPLE ATTACKS

A character may use a Free Action to attack multiple targets in a single action (see **Multiple Attacks**, p. 196) by splitting their dice pool. This action must be combined with a Fire Weapon Action, Throw Weapon Action, Melee Attack Action, Reckless Spellcasting, or Cast Spell Action.

RUN

Running uses a Free Action and inflicts Running movement modifiers. Running is any movement that exceeds the character's Walking Movement Rate in a single Combat Turn (see **Movement**, p. 161).

SPEAK/TEXT/TRANSMIT PHRASE

One short phrase of verbal communication is a Free Action. If the character wants to speak more, each additional phrase or sentence requires a Free Action. The gamemaster should be careful to control excessive, unrealistic conversations within the span of a single action during a 3-second Combat Turn. If the gamemaster and players prefer more elaborate communications, parameters should be laid out before the mission begins. Characters who are equipped to send text messages through a direct neural interface connection with their commlink may also send short messages as a Free Action.

SIMPLE ACTIONS

A Simple Action is one step more complicated than a Free Action and requires more concentration to attempt.

During his Action Phase, a character may take two Simple Actions, though only one can be an attack action. A character may also take a Free Action with the two Simple Actions.

ACTIVATE FOCUS

A character may activate a focus they are carrying with a Simple Action.

CALL SPIRIT

This action is used to call a spirit that has already been summoned and placed on standby.

CHANGE DEVICE MODE

A character may use a Simple Action to activate, deactivate, or change the mode on any device with a simple switch, a virtual button, or a command from a commlink or other control device through either a wired or wireless link. This includes changing a gun's firing mode, changing a shotgun's choke, changing vision systems, switching a commlink to hidden mode, turning a device's wireless functionality off, and so on. It takes longer to interact with some devices; check individual gear descriptions.

CHANGE GUN MODE

A character holding a ready firearm can change its firing mode via a Simple Action. If the weapon is a properly linked smartgun, it costs only a Free Action to change the mode (see **Firearms**, p. 424, and **Smartgun Systems**, p. 433). This includes changing a shotgun's choke if the gun does not have a smartgun link (see **Shotguns**, p. 429).

COMMAND SPIRIT

Issuing a command to a single spirit or group of spirits under a summoner's control is a Simple Action.

DISMISS SPIRIT

This is the action of freeing a spirit from the summoner's control. It does not immediately send the spirit back to its home plane but instead frees it to do as it chooses.

FIRE BOW

Firing a single arrow from a loaded bow is a Simple Action. To nock a single arrow, the character must use the Reload Weapon Simple Action.

FIRE SEMI-AUTO, SINGLE-SHOT, BURST FIRE OR FULL-AUTO

A character may fire a readied firearm in Semi-Automatic, Single-Shot, Burst-Fire, or Fully-Auto mode via a Simple Action (see **Firearms**, p. 424) but may not take any other attack actions in the same Action Phase. If a character has one weapon in each hand, he may fire once with each weapon by adding a Multiple Attacks Free Action (see **Multiple Attacks**, p. 96); the off-hand modifier applies (see **Attacking Using Off-Hand Weapon**, p. 178). When taken as Simple Actions, Burst Fire fires 3 bullets, while Full-Auto fires 6 bullets.

INSERT CLIP

A character may insert a fresh clip into a ready firearm by taking a Simple Action, but only if he has first removed the previous clip (see **Remove Clip**, p. 166, and **Reloading Weapons**, p. 163).

OBSERVE IN DETAIL

A character may make a detailed observation by taking a Simple Action. This allows a Perception Test (see **Using Perception**, p. 135).

Note that characters should always be able to observe what is immediately obvious (gamemaster's discretion, keeping in mind any perception enhancements the character may have) without having to spend a Simple Action and make a Perception Test. For example, a character might automatically be aware that someone is running toward him with something in hand; however, the gamemaster may decide that the character cannot tell if it is a friend or foe or what is in their hand without taking an Observe in Detail action.

PICK UP/PUT DOWN OBJECT

A character may pick up an object within reach or put down one that he was holding as a Simple Action. This action means care is taken to put the object down or pick it up. Just dropping an object is a Free Action, but items that get dropped are more likely to be damaged than items that are set down.

QUICK DRAW

A character may attempt to quick-draw a pistol, pistol-sized weapon, or small throwing weapon and immediately fire it by using a Quick Draw Simple Action. For the character to successfully draw the weapon, the player must make a (Weapon Skill) + Reaction [Physical] (3) Test. If the weapon is held in a quick-draw holster (see p. 432), reduce the threshold to 2. If the test is successful, the character draws the weapon and fires as a single Simple Action. If the test fails, he clears the gun but cannot fire with the same action. If he glitches, the gun is stuck in the holster or dropped, and no more actions are allowed. On a critical glitch, a drawn blade may be fumbled out of the character's reach or a pistol accidentally fired while still in the holster; the gamemaster decides the exact nature of the screw-up.

Only properly holstered weapons can be quick-drawn. They do not have to be in a quick-draw holster, but they do need to be in a holster or sheath or on a proper sling to be quick-drawn. Two weapons may be quick-drawn and fired simultaneously, but the (Weapon Skill) + Reaction dice pool is split, and off-hand penalties apply.

READY WEAPON

A character may ready a weapon by spending a Simple Action. The weapon may be a firearm, melee weapon, throwing weapon, ranged weapon, or mounted or vehicular weapon. Readying entails drawing a firearm from a holster, drawing a throwing or melee weapon from a sheath, picking up any kind of weapon, or generally preparing any kind of weapon for use. A weapon must be ready before it can be used. Weapons not held in a traditional holster may require a Complex Action to ready at the gamemaster's discretion.

A character can ready a number of small throwing weapons, such as throwing knives or shuriken, equal to one-half his Agility (round up) per Ready Weapon action.

RECKLESS SPELLCASTING

A spellcaster may use a Simple Action to cast a spell more quickly, but at the cost of higher Drain. See **Step 4: Cast Spell**, p. 281.

REMOVE CLIP

A character may remove a clip from a ready firearm by taking a Simple Action (see **Insert Clip**, p. 165, and also **Reload Weapons**, p. 163). It takes another Simple Action to grab a fresh clip and slam it into the weapon.

SHIFT PERCEPTION

A character capable of Astral Perception may shift perception to or from Astral Space as a Simple Action.

STAND UP

Using a Simple Action, a character who is lying down or prone may stand up. If the character is wounded and attempting to stand, he must succeed in a Body + Willpower (2) Test to do so (wound modifiers apply to this test).

TAKE AIM

A character may take aim with a ready firearm, bow, or throwing weapon as a Simple Action. Take Aim actions are cumulative, but the benefits are lost if the character takes any other kind of action—including a Free Action—at any time before attacking. Take Aim actions may be extended over multiple Action Phases and Combat Turns. The maximum bonus a character may gain from sequential Take Aim actions, either to her limit or her dice pool, is equal to one-half the character's Willpower, rounded up.

Each Take Aim action applies a +1 dice pool modifier *or* +1 Accuracy increase to the Attack Test.

If the character is using image magnification or a targeting scope, Take Aim must be used to line up the shot in order to receive the bonus from the item. In this case the first action of Take Aim does not provide any additional bonus beyond enabling the function of the modification.

TAKE COVER

A character may use this Simple Action to gain a cover bonus to their defense test, as long as she is not surprised (see **Surprise**, p. 192). A character who is surprised may not take cover.

THROW WEAPON

A character may throw a ready throwing weapon (see **Ready Weapon**, p. 165) by taking a Simple Action. The character may not take any other attack actions in the same Action Phase. Multiple readied throwing weapons can be thrown at a target within Short or Medium range by adding a Multiple Attacks Free Action (see **Multiple Attacks**, p. 196).

USE SIMPLE DEVICE

A character can use any simple device with a Simple Action. Simple devices are those that are activated with

a simple movement like a thumb trigger, pressing a single key, or tapping a single icon.

COMPLEX ACTIONS

A Complex Action requires intense concentration and/or finesse. Only one Complex Action is possible per Action Phase. A character may also take a Free Action in the same Action Phase as a Complex Action.

ASTRAL PROJECTION

A character capable of Astral Projection may shift their consciousness to the astral plane as a Complex Action (see p. 313).

BANISH SPIRIT

A character may enter into a Banishing contest with a spirit as a Complex Action (see p. 301).

CAST SPELL

A character may cast a spell as a Complex Action.

FIRE FULL-AUTO WEAPON

A character may fire a readied firearm in Full-Auto fire mode via a Complex Action (see **Firearms**, p. 424). If a character has one weapon in each hand, he may fire once with each weapon by adding a Multiple Attacks Free Action (see **Multiple Attacks**, p. 196). Off-hand modifier applies (see **Attacker Using Off-Hand Weapon**, p. 178). When fired as a Complex Action, Full-Auto uses 10 bullets. Remember the effects of cumulative recoil when using these fire modes. And good fragging luck!

FIRE LONG BURST OR SEMI-AUTO BURST

A character may fire a readied firearm in Long Burst or Semi-Auto Burst via a Complex Action (see **Firearms**, p. 424). A character may attack multiple targets within Short or Medium range by adding a Multiple Attacks Free Action (see **Multiple Attacks**, p. 196). If a character has one weapon in each hand, he may fire once with each weapon by adding a Multiple Attacks Free Action (see **Multiple Attacks**, p. 167). Off-hand modifier applies (see **Attacker Using Off-Hand Weapon**, p. 178). Remember the effects of cumulative recoil when using these fire modes.

FIRE MOUNTED OR VEHICLE WEAPON

Fire a previously readied mounted or vehicle weapon by taking a Complex Action (see **Vehicle Combat**, p. 198).

LOAD AND FIRE BOW

With this action a character can load and fire a bow with a single Complex Action. The two activities can be reversed, Fire and Load Bow, if the bow had been readied using a Simple Action already.

MATRIX ACTIONS

A character may perform most Matrix actions with a Complex Action.

MELEE ATTACK

A character may make a melee attack by taking a Complex Action (see **Melee Combat**, p. 184). A character may also attack multiple targets within melee range by adding a Multiple Attacks Free Action (see **Multiple Attacks**, p. 196).

RELOAD FIREARM

Weapons that are belt fed (belt), break action (b), cylinder (cy), drum (d), internal magazine (m), muzzle loaders, or use a speed loader are reloaded using a Complex Action (see **Reloading Weapons**, p. 163).

RIGGER JUMP IN

A character with a VCR and rigger adapted vehicle may jump in to control the vehicle with a Complex Action.

SPRINT

Sprinting allows a character to increase his Running rate by using a Complex Action and making a Running Test (see **Movement**, p. 161).

SUMMONING

A character may summon a spirit to assist them with a Complex Action.

USE SKILL

A character may use an appropriate skill by taking a Complex Action (see **Using Skills**, p. 128).

INTERRUPT ACTIONS

There are times when a character is permitted to take an action outside his allotted Action Phase. Such rare instances are called Interrupt Actions and are clearly identified in the rules. When a character uses an Interrupt Action, such as Full Defense, he takes an action out of turn, but only if he has enough Initiative Score left in the Combat Turn to pay the price for the action. Interrupt Actions occur outside the normal course of the Combat Turn and do not cost the character their Action Phase (unless they reduce their Initiative Score below 0 with their actions). The Initiative Score reduction occurs at the time of the Interrupt Action. A character may only take an Interrupt Action prior to their first Action Phase if they are not surprised (see **Surprise**, p. 192).

BLOCK
(–5 INITIATIVE SCORE)

A character may choose to use her own unarmed combat skill to block incoming melee attacks as an Interrupt Action (see **Defending in Combat**, p. 188). By decreasing her Initiative Score, the defending character can add her Unarmed Combat skill to their defense test. This is a one-time add, unlike going on Full Defense (below) which lasts for an entire Combat Turn.

DODGE
(–5 INITIATIVE SCORE)

A character may choose to use her own skill to dodge incoming attacks as an Interrupt Action (see **Defending in Combat**, p. 188). By decreasing her Initiative Score, the defending character can add her Gymnastics skill to the defense test. This is a one-time add, unlike going on Full Defense (below) which lasts for an entire Combat Turn.

HIT THE DIRT
(–5 INITIATIVE SCORE)

A character who has already used their Free Action may choose to drop prone when caught by suppressive fire using this action (see **Suppressive Fire**, p. 179). The defending character doesn't need to make the Reaction + Edge test but is considered prone on their next Action Phase. If the suppressive fire continues, the defending character needs to use a Stand Up Simple Action to get back up, risking getting shot, or fight from the ground. If the suppressive fire has stopped the prone character still needs to use a Stand Up Simple Action to get back up.

INTERCEPT
(–5 INITIATIVE SCORE)

A character may take an Interrupt Action to intercept an opponent who attempts to move past him (within 1 + Reach meter(s)) or break out of melee combat (see **Interception**, p. 194). The Intercept Action allows a character to make a melee attack out of turn. If the character does not have enough Initiative Score left that Action Phase he cannot intercept.

PARRY
(–5 INITIATIVE SCORE)

A character may choose to use his own melee weapon skill to deflect incoming melee attacks as an Interrupt Action (see **Defending in Combat**, p. 188). By decreasing his Initiative Score, the defending character can add his melee weapon skill to their defense test. This is a one-time add, unlike going on Full Defense (below), which lasts for an entire Combat Turn. Bonus die, such as die from a relevant weapon foci, can be added to this test.

FULL DEFENSE
(–10 INITIATIVE SCORE)

A character may choose to focus on deliberately avoiding incoming attacks as an Interrupt Action (see **Defending in Combat**, p. 188). This action adds the character's Willpower to their Defense tests for the entire Combat Turn. Full Defense actions may be taken at any time, even before the character's Action Phase as an Interrupt Action, as long as the character is not surprised. Characters may only go on Full Defense if they have enough Initiative Score left in that Combat Turn. The bonus gained in this manner is kept until the end of the Combat Turn so a character can choose to fight defensively early in the round by decreasing her Initiative Score to increase her defense. This bonus is also cumulative with other Interrupt Actions.

ACCURACY

All weapons have an Accuracy score that acts as a Limit for that weapon. Accuracy scores reflect the quality and craftsmanship of a weapon and determine the number of hits that can be used in a skill test.

Melee weapons, those that were made for combat, have an average Accuracy of 5. Improvised weapons—items that can be used, however awkwardly, to inflict damage but are not designed for combat, such as a golf club or frying pan—usually have an accuracy of 4. Random objects used as weapons that are very unwieldy or heavy (like a chair, barstool, or refrigerator) generally have an Accuracy of 3. Standard Weapons that are in poor condition or broken can have their Accuracy reduced by 1.

Unarmed attacks use the Inherent Limit [Physical] as determined by the Attributes of the character and do not have an Accuracy rating. Items used as part of the Unarmed Attack, also use the Physical limit.

Most basic ranged weapons have an accuracy of 4 or 5. Specialized ranged weapons, like some sniper rifles, have an accuracy of 6 or higher. Improvised ranged weapons have an Accuracy of 3, and broken, old, damaged, or otherwise flawed ranged weapons can have their Accuracy reduced by 1, to a minimum of 1. This includes items that have been damaged through Matrix Combat.

ARMOR

Armor is used with Body to make damage resistance tests (see **Step 3: Defend**, p. 173). The armor rating is modified by the attack's AP value (see **Armor Penetration**, p. 169).

Good armor protects a character from serious physical harm. If the modified Damage Value (DV) of an attack causing Physical damage is less than the AP-modified armor rating, then the attack causes Stun damage instead of Physical damage.

ARMOR AND ENCUMBRANCE

If a character is wearing more than one piece of armor at a time, the value of the highest armor piece applies for determining Armor. All the other pieces do nothing but add a lot of bulk; too much can make Joe Shadowrunner look like the SoyPuff Marshmallow Man, slowing him down more than the protection is worth.

Armor accessories, items listed with a "+" in front of their rating, add to the character's Armor for the purpose of Damage Resistance tests. The maximum bonus a character receive from these items is limited to their Strength attribute. For every 2 full points by which the bonus exceeds the character's Strength, the character suffers a -1 penalty to Agility and Reaction.

EXAMPLE

Full Deck is headed out on a run and wants to be able to make a quick change from runner chic to corporate clean. He throws on some Actioneer Business Clothes (Armor 8) and then pulls on his Urban Explorer jumpsuit (Armor 9). For resistance tests he uses only the Armor 9 from the jumpsuit.

Caster is looking for a little extra protection during a particularly dangerous raid the team is planning. He borrows Wombat's riot shield (Armor +6) to hide behind as they enter. He's seen Wombat use it dozens of times and thinks it shouldn't be a problem. Caster has a Strength of 2. Comparing the Armor bonus to his Strength shows a difference of 4 full points, meaning Caster receives a –2 to both his Agility and Reaction while trying to use the riot shield.

When Caster eventually decides he can't handle hauling around the big shield, he gives it back to Wombat. Wombat has a Strength attribute of 5. Comparing his Strength to the Armor bonus of the shield gives a difference of only 1. He doesn't have a problem with it, but he is also wearing a helmet (Armor +2). The total Armor bonus needs to be compared to his Strength. Wombat is now at a +8 Armor bonus with a Strength of 5, so he suffers a –1 penalty to his Agility and Reaction while using both armor accessories.

SPECIALIZED PROTECTION

Standard armor is generally not designed to protect against electricity, fire, and other special damage types and thus suffers greatly when faced with attacks of this nature. But fear not, good shadowrunner, you have options. Any clothing item, including Armor, can be modified with a number of additional features that help protect against other forms of damage. This additional protection is used along with the modified Armor values to determine total Armor against an attack. Specialized armor values can be combined on a single piece of armor, but the sum of the ratings cannot exceed the capacity of the armor (p. 436).

ARMOR PENETRATION

Certain weapons are better at punching holes in armor than others. A weapon's Armor Penetration (AP) represents this penetrating ability. AP modifies a target's Armor rating when he makes a damage resistance test. Some weapons fare poorly against armor, and so actually raise the value of the armor. If the target is not wearing armor, this bonus does not apply. If a weapon's AP reduces an armor's rating to 0 or below, the character loses all his armor dice on his damage resistance test but does not subtract from his Body.

DAMAGE

Involved as they are in an illegal and often hazardous line of work, shadowrunners get hurt and get hurt often. What kind of damage, how bad an injury is, and how much it affects the character vary greatly depending on the situation.

TYPES OF INJURY

Damage in *Shadowrun* is defined as Physical or Stun. Each type of damage is tracked on a separate Condition Monitor.

PHYSICAL DAMAGE

Physical damage, the most dangerous type, is the kind done by guns, explosions, most melee weapons, and many magic spells. Weapons that inflict Physical damage have the letter "P" following their Damage Value.

Physical damage takes a longer time to heal.

The number of boxes in the Physical Condition Monitor equals (Body ÷ 2) + 8.

STUN DAMAGE

Stun damage—bruising, muscle fatigue, and the like—is the kind done by fists, kicks, blunt weapons, stun rounds, shock weapons, concussion grenades, and some magic spells. If something does Stun damage, the letter "S" follows the Damage Value.

Stun damage takes a shorter time to heal.

The number of boxes in the Stun Condition Monitor equals (Willpower ÷ 2) + 8.

WOUND MODIFIERS

Injuries cause pain, bleeding, and other distractions that interfere with doing all sorts of actions. Wound modifiers are accumulated with every third box of damage and are cumulative between damage tracks and with other negative modifiers such as spells or adverse conditions.

Wound modifiers are applied to all tests not about reducing the number of boxes you're about to take on your Condition Monitor (such as damage resistance, resisting direct combat spells, toxin resistance, and so on).

The Wound Modifier penalty is also applied to the character's Initiative attribute and therefore their Initiative Score during combat.

EXCEEDING THE CONDITION MONITOR

When the total number of boxes in a damage track (Physical or Stun) are filled in, and damage still remains to be applied, one of two things happens:

- If the damage is Stun, it carries over into the Physical damage track. For every two full boxes of excess Stun damage, carry over 1 box to the Physical damage track
- If a character takes more Physical damage than he has boxes in the Physical damage track, the character is in trouble. Overflowing the Physical damage track means he's near death. Instant death occurs only if damage overflows the Physical damage track by more than the character's Body attribute. One point over that limit and his memory will be toasted at their favorite shadowrunner bar.

Characters whose Physical damage overflow has not been filled can survive if they receive prompt medical attention. If no medical attention is available, the character takes an additional box of damage from loss of blood, shock, or other complications for every (Body) minutes he manages to hang on. If the cumulative overflow damage exceeds the character's Body attribute before medical help arrives, he dies.

EXAMPLE

Pauly G, a troll smuggler, and Beta Test, his human decker sidekick, got caught sneaking across the Salish border. Neither has a valid SIN, and the Rangers who caught them are looking to send a message to other smugglers. They tie the runners to a tree and line up their shots.

The two Rangers fire their rifles and one of them does a staggering 13P of damage.

Pauly G rolls his Body (9) + Armor (1) and gets 4 hits, reducing the damage to 9 boxes of Physical damage. Pauly has 6 empty boxes in his Physical Condition Monitor so he fills in all those and takes the remaining 3 as overflow. If he could get some medical attention before the overflow damage reaches 10 boxes he could survive.

Beta Test rolls his Body (2) + Armor (0) and manages to get 1 hit, reducing the damage to 12 boxes of Physical damage. Beta Test has 3 empty boxes in his Physical Condition Monitor so he fills in all those and moves the remaining 9 to overflow which only has 2 boxes (equal to Beta Test's Body).

Beta Test is headed to the Happy Hunting Grounds. Pauly G is going to have to get some luck and some help to avoid joining him.

SPECIAL DAMAGE TYPES

Bullets do their damage by delivering kinetic energy to a target, but that's not the only kind of hurting that can be put on a runner. Burning, freezing, zapping, and chemical damage can all dampen the mood of the most boisterous runner. Along with the elemental forces things like gravity (or at least the stop at the bottom), drowning, and general exhaustion can add to the pain and suffering. All of these different damages have their own rules quirks, detailed below.

ELEMENTAL DAMAGE

This is damage caused by non-kinetic sources, like acid, fire, etc. Most of the time you'd look to magic for this sort of damage, but some mundane weapons and attacks can deliver added elemental effects.

ACID DAMAGE

Acid damage is Physical. In addition to its normal damage, it also reduces the rating of any Armor it hits by 1. If the acid isn't removed from the target (by washing it off, or because the acid is from a spell and evaporates into mana after the spell ends), then the acid continues to burn. Each Combat Turn the base DV of the acid is decreased by 1 and damage is applied again. The acid also continues to burn through armor reducing the target's Armor rating by 1 until the acid is removed, neutralized, or loses all its base DV. The Armor reduction should be applied to worn Armor first but could be applied to Armor accessories (+Armor items) if the gamemaster allows.

At the gamemaster's discretion, acid can also create Light Smoke conditions in an area around the target.

COLD DAMAGE

Cold is just the absence of heat, but it hurts when too much heat is absent, and calling cold "absent heat" doesn't make it any less painful. Cold damage is Physical. Additionally, cold damage can make armor brittle, liquids freeze, lubricants gum up, etc. Make a simple Armor Test for anything directly hit. If the armor gets no hits, it breaks and cannot be used as armor. It can be repaired with the **Building & Repairing** rules, p. 145. In the case of a glitch, it's destroyed irreparably. With a critical glitch the armor breaks irreparably in a dangerous way.

ELECTRICITY DAMAGE

A wide variety of nonlethal weapons are designed to incapacitate targets with electrical shock attacks, including stun batons, tasers, cyberware shock hands, and similar electrically charged weapons. These weapons rely on a contact discharge of electricity rather than kinetic energy. Spells and critter powers such as Lightning Bolt and Energy Aura cause similar effects.

Electrical damage is treated as Stun or Physical damage depending on the source and/or target. The **Non-conductivity** armor upgrade (p. 438) adds its full rating to the Armor value. The gamemaster can also decide which (if any) other factors may modify the target's damage, such as extra conductivity for a character covered in water.

An Electricity attack that does damage can stun and incapacitate the target as well, though if there is no damage, there is no secondary effect at all.

Secondary effects for characters injured by Electricity damage include a -1 dice pool penalty on all actions and Defense Tests, but not Damage Resistance Tests, for 1 Combat Turn and an immediate Initiative Score reduction of 5. The dice pool penalty and Initiative Score reduction do not accumulate with multiple attacks, but the length of the penalty is extended by 1 Combat Turn for each successful damaging attack while a character is affected. If the character's Initiative Score is reduced to 0 or below, they lose their last action. If they have no Initiative Score left the reduction comes on the start of the next Combat Turn.

Electronic equipment and drones can also be affected by Electricity damage. They never suffer Stun damage so Electricity damage is Physical when used against electronics and drones. They resist damage as usual and suffer a secondary effect if they take even a single box of damage.

The secondary effect for electronics and drones damaged by Electricity damage is shorting out or overloading. In game terms this is reflected as secondary Matrix damage equal to half the Physical damage rounded down.

Vehicles can be damaged by Electricity attacks but do not suffer any secondary effects. Specific systems of vehicles can be targeted by a **Called Shots** (p. 195).

EXAMPLE

Wombat has been drinking pretty heavily and the bouncers at the Blue Flame Tavern remember the last time they had to ask him to leave, so they call Knight Errant and wait for the officers to arrive and help them escort Wombat out the door.

Well, Wombat can't stand Pawns (his term of endearment for KE cops) and decides "quietly" is not an option for how he wants to leave. The KE officers feel sufficiently threatened, and they decide it would be easier to carry Wombat out than try to change his mind.

Both officers pull their Yamaha Pulsar tasers and fire before poor Wombat can reconsider his options. They score 4 and 3 net hits, so Wombat must make a Damage Resistance test against 11S and 10S respectively. Luckily for Wombat, he upgraded his lined coat with nonconductivity rating 4.

Against the first damage he rolls Body 6 + Armor 9 + nonconductivity 4, with an AP adjustment of –5, for a total of 14 dice. He gets 6 hits, reducing the damage to 5S. Since he took damage he also suffers the secondary effects of –1 to all actions for 1 Combat Turn and –5 to his Initiative Score.

Against the second hit he rolls the same pool of dice and gets 7 hits. He still takes 3S, but the secondary effects are changed. He doesn't lose any more from his Initiative Score, and the –1 dice pool penalty is already there and does not increase. It does, however, get extended by 1 Combat Turn to a total of 2 Combat Turns.

After Wombat lays out one of the Pawns on his Action Phase (he may be slowed but he's not out) the other hits him with another dart from the Pulsar. The KE officer scores 6 hits but is limited by the Accuracy of the weapon, which is 5, so Wombat is facing 12S.

Wombat rolls his Damage Resistance but spends a point of Edge to throw some extra dice into the pool and gain the Rule of Six. After an awesome roll that scores 14 hits, he shrugs off the damage. Since he didn't take damage he doesn't suffer any secondary effects and still has some actions left to KO the other KE Pawn.

FIRE DAMAGE

Fire damage is Physical. It can also make things catch fire. To determine if something catches fire, roll Armor Value + Fire Resistance - Fire AP (see **Fire Armor Piercing Ratings** table, below). The threshold on this test is the net hits rolled on the fire-based attack. If the item succeeds, it is not on fire (for now). Armor accessories are excluded from the test but the gamemaster may require them to make their own test.

When something catches fire, the fire has an initial Damage Value of 3. This damage is caused at the end of each Combat Turn, and the DV increases by 1 at the start of each subsequent Combat Turn until the item is completely destroyed or the fire is put out. You can fight the fire a number of ways (water, smothering, etc.), making an Agility + Intuition Test and reducing the fire's DV by 1 for each hit. Remember, as long as the fire is burning it can ignite any nearby flammables, including furniture, vehicles, foliage, and elves.

FIRE ARMOR PENETRATION

TYPE OF FIRE	AP
Open Flame	–2
Fire-based spells	–spell Force
Flame-based weapon	–6

EXAMPLE

Wombat is having a bad day. He left the bar and ran afoul of one of those really deranged members of the Halloweeners who carries a flamethrower! His reflexes are a little off due to the booze and he gets a solid blast of flame. The gamemaster calls for a test to see if his lined coat catches fire and rolls the lined coat's Armor 9 — the flamethrower's AP of 6 versus the two net hits the Halloweener got on the test. He only gets one hit, so the coat, and therefore Wombat, catches fire.

At the end of the Combat Turn Wombat has not put out the fire and has to resist 3P damage.

The next Combat Turn begins, and the fire's DV increases to 4P. In his next Action Phase Wombat decides to try to put out the fire with the classic stop, drop, and roll. The gamemaster calls it a Complex Action with a Drop Prone free action and asks for an Agility + Intuition roll modified by his wounds. Wombat hits the dirt, rolls — and fails.

Another Action Phase comes up and Wombat keeps trying. This time he gets 1 hit, still not enough to put out the fire but enough to lessen it a little.

At the end of this Combat Turn Wombat faces 3P damage again and needs to think fast about how he's going to get this fire out.

FALLING DAMAGE

When a character falls more than three meters, he takes Physical damage with a DV equal to the number of meters fallen, with an AP of -4. Use Body + Armor to resist this damage. The gamemaster should feel free to modify the damage to reflect a softer landing surface (sand), branches to break the fall, and so on.

Falling characters drop 50 meters in the first Combat Turn, 150 meters in the second Combat Turn, and 200 meters every Combat Turn after that. Terminal velocity for a falling body is about 200 meters per turn.

FATIGUE DAMAGE

Fatigue damage is Stun damage you incur through doing something strenuous or for being in the middle of something stressful. It's caused by harsh environments, hard exertion, and drek like that. Fatigue damage is resisted with Body + Willpower, not with any armor. Fatigue damage cannot be healed while the condition causing it still exists.

FATIGUE FROM RUNNING

If you sprint over multiple consecutive Combat Turns or during multiple Action Phases in the same Combat Turn, you risk taking fatigue damage. For every consecutive Action Phase or Combat Turn in which you use the Sprint action, you take a cumulative 1S DV of fatigue damage, which means that the second time you take it without dialing it back you take 2S, then 3S, etc.

If you're only running (using your running movement rate) instead of sprinting, this damage is taken every 3 minutes.

FATIGUE FROM ENVIRONMENTS

Hot, cold, humid, dry, polluted, or irradiated environments can cause fatigue damage, depending on the severity of the surroundings. As with running fatigue, the DV from a harsh environment starts at 1S and increases over time. Unlike running fatigue, if you keel over in a hostile environment the damage doesn't stop rolling in.

ENVIRONMENT & FATIGUE

ENVIRONMENT SEVERITY	FATIGUE DAMAGE INTERVAL
Mild	6 hours
Moderate	3 hours
Harsh	60 minutes
Extreme	1 minute (10 Combat Turns)
Deadly	6 seconds (2 Combat Turns)

HUNGER, THIRST, AND SLEEP DEPRIVATION

After 24 hours, if you haven't eaten, slept, or had a (non-alcoholic) drink, you risk fatigue damage. Like running, the damage starts at a mere 1S and increases over each interval it is taken. The interval for hunger is 6 days, for thirst is 2 days, and for sleep is 3 hours. This damage stops when you eat, drink, or sleep, respectively.

COMBAT RESOLUTION

Shadowrun includes four types of combat: **ranged combat** (p. 173), **melee combat** (p. 184), **astral combat** (p. 315), and **cybercombat** (p. 226). All combat, whether it involves firearms, knives, astral attacks, or attack programs, is resolved in essentially the same manner.

Combat is handled as an Opposed Test between the attacker and defender. The exact skills and attributes used depend on the type of combat, method of attack, and style of defense, as described in each section. Various modifiers may also apply to both attack and defense rolls.

If the attacker scores more hits than the defender, the attack hits the target. In the case of a tie the defender usually wins, with the exception of a **grazing hit** (p. 173). Otherwise, the attack misses.

COMBAT SEQUENCE

Use the procedure outlined below to resolve combat. You can use the mnemonic device "DADA" to quickly recall the sequence.

STEP 1: DECLARE

The attacker declares an attack as part of the Declare Actions part of his **Action Phase** (p. 163).

The defender also declares what method he is using to defend. A standard Defense Test (Reaction + Intuition) is free; for a price, the defender can choose to **Dodge** (p. 168), **Parry** (p. 168), **Block** (p. 168) or go on **Full Defense** (p. 168).

STEP 2: ATTACK

The attacker rolls Combat Skill + Attribute +/- modifiers [Limit].

Apply appropriate wound, environmental, recoil, and situational modifiers to the attacker according to the specific attack.

STEP 3: DEFEND

Defending is a two-step process:

A. The defender rolls Reaction + Intuition +/- modifiers. Apply appropriate wound, environmental, and situational modifiers to the defender according to the specific attack. Compare the results to the hits of the attacker. If the attacker scores more hits than the defender, the attack hits the target. Note the net hits (the number of hits that exceed the defender's hits) and move on to the second step. If the result is a tie the attack is considered a **grazing hit** (at right). If the defender scores more hits than the attacker, the attack misses and you're done rolling.

B. Add the attacker's net hits to the Damage Value of the weapon to determine the modified Damage Value. Apply the attack's **Armor Penetration** (AP) modifier (p. 169) to the defender's Armor to determine the modified Armor Value. Compare the modified Damage Value with the modified Armor Value to determine if damage will be Physical (modified DV is greater than or equal to the modified Armor Value) or Stun (modified DV is less than the modified Armor Value). As long as the modified Armor Value is positive, the defender rolls Body + modified Armor to resist damage. Otherwise the defender only rolls Body. Each hit scored reduces the modified Damage Value by 1. If the DV is reduced to 0 or less, the attack was stopped by the character's armor or thick hide, and no damage is inflicted.

STEP 4: APPLY EFFECT

Apply the remaining Damage Value to the target's Condition Monitor (see **Damage**, p. 169). Each point of DV equals 1 box of damage. **Wound Modifiers** (p. 169) may come into effect as a result of the damage. Characters may also need to check for **knockdown** (p. 194).

The additional effects of certain damage types (see **Damage**, p. 169) should also be determined here.

GRAZING HIT

If the result of the Opposed Test is a tie, the attack is considered a grazing hit. A grazing hit does not do any damage, but the attacker makes contact. This allows certain contact-only attacks (poisons, shock gloves, touch-only combat spells, etc.) to still do damage.

RANGED COMBAT

Ranged combat is determined with an Opposed Test between the attacker's Weapon Skill + Agility [Accuracy] vs. the defender's Reaction + Intuition. Net hits are applied to the weapons DV or used to reduce scatter in the case of thrown weapons and launched weapons. The attack and defense rolls are modified by environmental, wound, recoil, and situational modifiers as appropriate to the attack.

RANGED ATTACK MODIFIERS

Ranged combat in *Shadowrun* is not like a trip to the shooting gallery. Numerous factors plot against the runner making her shot. Four modifiers—environmental,recoil, situational, and wound—impact the runner's chances of hitting her target.

ENVIRONMENTAL MODIFIERS

Like the name implies, environmental modifiers reflect the conditions surrounding the action. The environmental conditions for both the attacker and defender should be considered before the modifiers are applied. For example: If an attacker is standing in the broad daylight when he lobs a grenade into a pitch-black cave with nothing to negate the light penalty, the Total Darkness -6 modifier applies even though he's standing in bright light. Conversely, if the attacker throws his grenade from inside the pitch black cave at a target standing in the sunlight, there is no lighting penalty because the target is fully illuminated.

To determine the Environmental modifier, take only the most severe environmental condition and use the associated modifier. If there are two or more environmental modifiers tied for most severe, bump the modifier up a category. Note that Range is an environmental modifier.

ENVIRONMENTAL MODIFIERS COMPENSATION

Environmental condition modifiers can be ameliorated by employing appropriate systems, accessories, and/or spells. Modifier compensation is a tool of the player, not the gamemaster. The gamemaster presents the

EXAMPLE

RANGED ATTACK

Wombat, the wary street samurai, and Cutter, the wild ganger from the 405 Hellhounds, are about to throw down. Wombat makes the first attack with his trusty Browning Ultra-Power heavy pistol. He fires one shot as a Simple Action. Once the appropriate modifiers are considered (we'll cover this in more detail later), he has a –1 modifier on his shot.

Wombat rolls Pistols 4 + Agility 6 + modifiers –1 for 9 total dice; his limit on this test is the gun's modified Accuracy of 6. He rolls his pool of 9 dice and gets 4 hits.

Cutter is on the other end and he gets his free Defense test. The modifiers for the defense test come out to –1 die. He rolls Reaction 3 + Intuition 3 + modifiers –1 with no limit because there is no skill involved. He rolls 5 dice and gets 2 hits.

Comparing the hits we see Wombat has 2 more hits than Cutter and therefore gets 2 nets hit to apply to damage.

The next step is figuring out what kind of hurting this might be putting on Cutter by comparing the modified Damage Value of Wombat's Ultra-Power and the modified Armor rating of Cutter's armor jacket.

The DV of the Ultra-Power is 8P; 2 is added for Wombat's net hits, making the modified DV 10P. The base Armor rating for Cutter's armor jacket is 12; subtract 1 for the Armor Penetration (AP) of the Ultra-Power, and the modified Armor rating is 11. Since the modified Armor rating is greater than the modified Damage Value the attack's damage code changes from Physical to Stun (10P to 10S).

Now Cutter needs to roll his Damage Resistance test. He rolls Body 3 + modified Armor rating 11 and gets 5 hits. Those hits are subtracted from the modified Damage Value (10 – 5 = 5). Cutter has to take 5S damage, so he marks off 5 boxes of his Stun Condition Monitor.

MELEE ATTACK

Cutter forgot to bring a gun to the gunfight, so he has to go after Wombat with his trusty hand razors. Cutter charges in and makes a single melee attack against Wombat. Modifiers for this attack turn out in Cutter's favor and get him a +1 dice pool bonus.

Cutter rolls Unarmed Combat 4 + Specialization (Cyber Implant Weaponry) 2 + Agility 4 + modifiers 1 for a total of 11 dice. He uses his Physical limit for the test, which is 6. He rolls and gets 8 hits.

Wombat is on the defensive now and gets his free Defense Test. The modifiers for the Defense Test come out to –1. He rolls Reaction 4 + Intuition 3 + modifiers –1 with no limit because there is no skill involved. Wombat rolls 6 dice and gets 2 hits.

We compare hits and see that Cutter has 4 more hits that Wombat and therefore gets 4 net hits to apply to damage.

The next step is plugging in the numbers—the modified Damage Value of Cutter's hand razors vs. the modified Armor rating of Wombat's lined coat—to see how much pain Wombat is going to experience.

The base DV for hand razors is (STR + 1)P. Cutter has a Strength of 3, so the base DV is 4P. Add 4 for Cutter's net hits and the modified DV is 8P. The base Armor rating for Wombat's lined coat is 9; subtract 3 for the Armor Penetration (AP) of the hand razors and the modified Armor rating is 6. Since the modified Armor rating is less than the modified Damage Value the attacks damage code stays Physical.

Now Wombat needs to roll his Damage Resistance test. He rolls Body 6 + modified Armor rating 6 and gets 3 hits. Those hits are subtracted from the modified Damage Value (8 – 3 = 5) and Wombat must mark off 5 boxes of his Physical Condition Monitor.

modifiers and players are expected to understand the capabilities of their systems, accessories, and spells and know when to use what to best effect.

Each system mitigates one or more of the modifiers to help determine what modifiers remain and to what degree they impact the action. The table below gives a quick reference for which systems affect which modifiers.

VISIBILITY

Sailors have long feared the fog not only for the ghostly presences they claim to see but for the real-world issue of visibility and the ability of pirates to use the fog as cover. Runners should fear the fog for much the same reason—you never know what lurks in the mist. Whether it's natural rain, fog, smoke from natural sources, or smoke screen of some type thrown up for cover, they all block line of sight. Visibility modifiers are mitigated in all conditions by ultrasound vision systems; thermographic vision compensates in all cases except for thermal smoke.

LIGHT/GLARE

The concept of sight has expanded on the mean streets of 2075. Vision enhancement systems and variations in natural sight have made the idea of "seeing" taking on different meanings. There are a variety of methods a runner can use to mitigate Light modifiers. Ultrasound eliminates the penalty in any light (but only within 50 meters), thermographic compensates to a degree in all light conditions, flare compensation or sunglasses assist when the light is too bright, and low-light vision is helpful in partial or dim light situations.

WIND

A light breeze might not throw off a shot, but the stronger the wind the more a shooter is going to have to com-

ENVIRONMENTAL MODIFIERS

VISIBILITY	LIGHT/GLARE	WIND	RANGE	MODIFIER
Clear	Full Light/No Glare	None or Light Breeze	Short	—
Light Rain/Fog/Smoke	Partial Light/Weak Glare	Light Winds	Medium	–1
Moderate Rain/Fog/Smoke	Dim Light/Moderate Glare	Moderate Winds	Long	–3
Heavy Rain/Fog/Smoke	Total Darkness/Blinding Glare	Strong Winds	Extreme	–6
Combination of two or more conditions at the –6 level row				–10

pensate. Compensating for wind is tough because you can't see it without some kind of indicator, such as blowing leaves, a flag flapping in the wind, or a coat pressed hard against the target. Wind categories are generalized and left up to the gamemaster's discretion instead of giving hard numbers for wind speed. Wind speed can be a factor at the shooter's position, the target's position, and any position in between. Wind modifiers are mitigated by smartlink accessories that calculate adjustments before the shot and alleviated by tracer rounds that let the shooter see how to adjust her aim for the next shot.

RANGE

Distance to target is always a factor when firing or throwing a weapon. Ranges for all weapons, grouped by type, are listed in the **Range Table** (p. 185). Standard weapons use the range listed for their category. Certain weapons and weapon modifications may change the category that is used. Changes like these will be listed in the description of the accessory or weapon in the **Street Gear** chapter (p. 416). Range modifiers are mitigated by the Image Magnification modification and tracer rounds.

RECOIL

Recoil is the effect firing a gun has on the weapon and the wielder. Muzzle rise, wrist strain, body shifting, and other factors caused by repeated firing of a weapon are all factors in recoil.

Recoil becomes more of a strain the more bullets you shoot. If you are firing two guns at the same time, shots from the one affect the other, so bullets from each gun add to your total recoil value.

To figure out your recoil penalty, start with the amount of recoil compensation you have. You get 1 free point anytime you start firing, then you add your Strength/3 (rounded up) and the recoil compensation of any guns you are prepared to shoot (that means loaded and in your hands; if you have to put bullets in it or draw it from a holster or do anything of the sort, you're not ready to shoot that weapon). Then subtract any bullets you're about to fire. If the number is a negative number, that's your recoil penalty; subtract the penalty from your dice pool before you roll for the attack.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPENSATION

COMPENSATION	EFFECT
Flare Compensation	Glare conditions shift two rows up
Image Magnification	Reduce Range conditions by one category
Low-Light Vision	Treat Partial Light and Dim Light as Full Light
Thermographic Vision	Visibility and Light conditions shift one row up
Tracer Rounds (FA)	Wind in rows below Light Winds and Range in rows below Short shift one row up
Smartlink	Wind shifts one row up
Sunglasses	Glare conditions shift one row up/Light conditions shift one row down
Ultrasound	Visibility shifts one row up, ignore Light conditions (within 50 meters)

CONDITION	HOW TO COMPENSATE
Visibility	Ultrasound, Thermographic
Light	Low-Light, Sunglasses, Thermographic, Ultrasound
Wind	Tracer Rounds, Smartlink
Range	Image Magnification, Tracer Rounds

When making multiple firearm attacks in a single Action Phase, calculate the total recoil penalty based on the bullets to be fired that round and remove it from your dice pool before splitting the pool for the multiple attacks.

PROGRESSIVE RECOIL

Recoil accumulates with every bullet fired until the attacker stops firing to bring the gun (or guns) back under control. Recoil penalties are cumulative over every Action Phase and Combat Turn unless the character takes, or is forced into, a Simple or Complex Action other than shooting. Recoil is cumulative to the character, not the weapon he's

EXAMPLE

SINGLE MODIFIER

Full Deck is trying to throw an area jammer into a guard shack to keep the guards from calling out when the team makes an assault. It's a clear night, no wind, no rain, and the shack is well-lit. The only condition Full Deck has to worry about is Range.

The target location is 20 meters away, Extreme range for Full Deck throwing a jammer. That means he has a –6 dice pool penalty.

SINGLE MODIFIER WITH COMPENSATION SYSTEM

Unsure about hitting his target, Full Deck takes out his Ares ZOOM smartgoggles with the Image Magnification modification. Full Deck activates the item and then uses a Take Aim action, which reduces the Range condition to Long. Full Deck makes his throw with a –3 penalty.

MULTIPLE MODIFIERS

Wombat has taken up an overwatch position for the team with his trusty Ares Desert Strike as they meet with Mr. Johnson after a particularly bad run. The rifle has a nice scope with image magnification and thermographic modifications as well as a smartlink system.

Wombat spots another person up on a crane, also sporting a nice rifle. He figures this must be Mr. Johnson's overwatch. Not taking any chances, Wombat Takes Aim at the other sniper and lines up a shot.

The target is 190 meters away, in dim light, and there is a moderate wind blowing in a light fog off the water. The applicable modifiers are as follows: Light Fog –1, Dim Light –3, Moderate Winds –3, and Medium Range –1. With two categories at the –3 level, he must shift the penalty to the next highest category. This means he is facing a stiff –6 penalty.

But Wombat has gear to help him. He has a thermographic vision system to shift the Light Fog up one category to no penalty and the Dim Light up one category to Partial Light (–1). His smartlink system compensates for the wind, shifting the penalty one category up to Light Winds (–1), and his image magnification system shifts his Range category to Short, which means no penalty. That leaves Wombat with two –1 modifiers, which then bump to the next category, making the final modifier –3.

firing. Recoil accumulates from every shot the character takes, not just from the firing of the same weapon.

SINGLE SHOTS

Single Shot (SS) weapons have the disadvantage of not being able to fire multiple rounds in a single Action Phase, but they have the advantage of not suffering from cumulative recoil when fired in single shot mode. It is assumed to be taking time to chamber the next round or otherwise make the SS weapon ready to fire again; this pause between shots means characters using these weapons do not suffer from progressive recoil. Recoil penalties apply when using the Multiple Attacks Action.

VEHICLE AND DRONE MOUNTED WEAPONS

Vehicle and Drone mounted weapons have the advantage of a sturdy platform from which to fire. The vehicle itself has enough mass to absorb the bulk of the recoil created by the weapon. Mounted weapons have Recoil Compensation equal to the Body of the vehicle plus any built in Recoil Compensation of the weapon.

SITUATIONAL MODIFIERS

Basically, everything else. These modifiers cover things the character may be doing while firing and also effects the character might be under (spells, special damage, etc.) when they attack.

SITUATIONAL MODIFIERS TABLE

SITUATION	ATTACKER DICE POOL MODIFIER
Attacker firing from cover with imaging device	–3
Attacker firing from a moving vehicle	–2
Attacker in melee combat	–3
Attacker running	–2
Attacker using off-hand weapon	–3
Attacker wounded	–Wound modifier
Blind fire	–6
Called shot	–4
Previously aimed with Take Aim	+1 Dice Pool, +1 Accuracy
Wireless Smartgun	+1 (gear)/+2 (implanted)

EXAMPLE

ONE-GUN RECOIL

Wombat is plugging away at some obnoxious gangers who insulted his street name. He starts with 1 free point and has a Strength of 3, giving him 2 points of compensation. He's using a Colt Manhunter with 1 point of recoil compensation, which brings his compensation total to 3.

On his first Action Phase he fires a Semi-Auto Burst, which is 3 bullets. That takes his compensation down to 0, meaning he has no penalty on this shot.

On the next Action Phase he fires only one shot. That moves his recoil penalty down one more point, making it –1. He has to take a single die away from his dice pool before rolling his attack. He then uses his other Simple Action to Take Cover. In the following Action Phase, he uses a Simple Action to Take Aim, which removes the effects of progressive recoil and resets his recoil compensation back to its initial 3 points. (He also has the option of increasing his dice pool by 1 or increasing his applicable limit on the next shot by 1.)

On the fourth Action Phase he attacks with a Semi-Auto Burst again, which again reduces his recoil compensation to 0. Again, he has no penalty on this roll.

Starting a new Combat Turn, Wombat continues to fire. On his first Action Phase of the new Combat Turn he fires another Semi-Auto Burst. That's 3 more bullets fired, moving his recoil score from 0 to –3. He has to take 3 dice out of his pool before rolling his attack.

On his next Action Phase, Wombat again fires a Semi-Auto Burst. That means his recoil score drops by 3 more points, taking the penalty down to –6. He's going to have trouble hitting anything, but he'll probably stop shooting soon so he can reload.

BURST RECOIL

Full Deck prefers the extra hitting potential of firing in bursts with his Ingram Smartgun. His Strength of 4 gives him 2 points to add to his 1 free point of compensation The Smartgun adds 2 more points of recoil compensation, making a total of 5.

On his first Action Phase Full Deck fires in Long Burst mode. 6 rounds are subtracted from the 5 points of recoil compensation, meaning he has a –1 dice pool penalty when he fires.

On the next Action Phase he goes for Burst Fire. That's 3 more bullets, so it makes the recoil penalty –4. The accumulated recoil is starting to stack up, so he may want to think about not attacking in the next Action Phase.

TWO-GUN RECOIL

Twin-Gun Teddy has two pistols, a Hammerli 620S and an Ares Predator, both with no recoil compensation. His Strength 3 gives him 1 point of recoil compensation, and the free point makes the total 2. He decides to use the Fire Semi-Auto Weapon action with the Multiple Attacks Free Action added on. He is firing 2 bullets total, which cancels out his recoil compensation but does not get into negative numbers. He has no recoil penalty on the shots.

If he did the same on his next turn, he would be firing 2 more bullets, which would make his recoil penalty –2. He would have to take 2 dice out of his pool before he divides the pool between the two guns.

BURST FIRE/TWO WEAPONS RECOIL

Twin-Gun Teddy is back in action, this time with two machine pistols, a Ceska Black Skorpion with 1 point of recoil compensation and a Steyr TMP with 2 points of recoil compensation. That's 3 points added to the 1 from his Strength and the 1 free point for a total of 5.

In the first round, he has two Burst Fire attacks going. That's 6 bullets, making the recoil penalty –1. Teddy takes 1 die from his dice pool before splitting it between the two weapons.

In the second round he gets more aggressive—Long Bursts with each gun. That's 12 bullets this round, so the recoil penalty is now 13. Teddy has to take 13 dice from his pool. He'd better have a big dice pool if he wants to roll even a single die on this attack. And he'd better start thinking about doing something besides shooting next round.

ATTACKER FIRING FROM COVER WITH IMAGING DEVICE

Blindly firing around a corner is no longer necessary with 2075 technology and imaging devices. A shooter can fire their camera or smartgun equipped weapon by simply sticking the gun around the corner and looking through the imaging system to see where it's aimed. This isn't easy to do, for numerous reasons, but at least it keeps most of you safely out of sight while putting lead downrange.

ATTACKER FIRING FROM A MOVING VEHICLE

Car chases are fun and exciting, but trying to line up a shot on a bumpy road while the car is avoiding obstacles and other vehicles is not easy. This modifier applies whenever a character fires an unmounted weapon from a vehicle.

ATTACKER IN MELEE COMBAT

Trying to get a clean shot off while someone keeps swinging a bat at your head is no walk in the ballpark. Because a certain amount of your attention is assumed to be focused on the melee it's hard to make a good shot, even when the guy swinging the baseball bat is right in front of you. This modifier applies to any characters trying to make a ranged attack while in melee combat. Remember if they try and break off the melee they are risking an Intercept action and a cheap swing by their opponent as well as risking not getting out of melee if they get tagged.

ATTACKER RUNNING

Moving quick does not mix well with trying to shoot a gun or throw a weapon. Anytime the attacker makes a move that puts him in his running movement rate he suffer the Running penalty on all ranged attacks.

ATTACKER USING IMAGE MAGNIFICATION

Making faraway targets look closer (and bigger) makes it easier to use the old "aim small, miss small" mantra your sniper school instructor whispered in your ear. Image Magnification reduces Range modifiers when used properly. In order to use an image magnification system the attacker needs to use the Take Aim action to gain the benefit of the system. This includes both accessories, such as scopes, as well as cybereye enhancements.

ATTACKER USING OFF-HAND WEAPON

Trying to throw, shoot, or even pick your nose with your off-hand just feels plain awkward. Any time a character tries to make an attack with their off hand, either due to injury, angle, or trying to re-enact the latest scene from the Ares blockbuster series, they lose some precision. This modifier also applies to the attacker's total dice pool if they are trying to fire two weapons at once.

ATTACKER WOUNDED

Wounds are distracting, and Wound modifiers apply to any and all ranged attacks. If you don't want this penalty you can get a Pain Editor. Or just not get shot.

BLIND FIRE

Whether due to darkness or cover, if the shooter doesn't know where the target is, they apply the Blind Fire modifier. This modifier is the same as the Total Darkness modifier and as such is not cumulative with it, but if strong winds or extreme range are also involved an additional -4 penalty can be applied. Some additional rules apply if the attacker is shooting through cover (see **Shooting Through Target Barriers**, p. 197).

CALLED SHOT

Sometimes we want our shots to count a little bit extra. Any time a character wants to make a **Called Shots** (p. 195) apply this modifier. Called Shots also require a Free Action to perform along with their basic attack action (p. 163).

PREVIOUSLY AIMED WITH TAKE AIM

Actually taking a moment to really line up the sights and assess the target can mean the difference between a solid hit and a solid miss. Taking a Simple Action to Take Aim before their shot adds a bonus to the Attacker's dice pool or Accuracy.

WIRELESS SMARTGUN

A wireless smartgun connection provides an assortment of bonuses, but this table only provides the bonus you get while using it to attack. When aiming (using the Take Aim action) with a smartgun system the shooter gets both bonuses with each action of aiming.

FIREARMS

Guns, guns, guns!!! Firearms come in a variety of shapes and sizes but they all do pretty much the same thing: throw high-velocity projectiles designed to damage whatever they hit. Whether this is spraying lead downrange or firing a single high-precision shot, the results can be deadly. Which, generally, is the plan.

FIRING MODES

The first thing we need to look at when it comes to firearms is the firing mode. A weapon's firing mode determines how quickly each round is ready to fire, how quickly you can pull the trigger, and what happens when you do. Each mode description includes a few examples so that a gamemaster can assess and classify any weapon not included in the descriptions below or the **Street Gear** chapter (p. 416).

SINGLE SHOT (SS)

Firing a Single Shot (SS) weapon uses a Simple Action that cannot be combined with any other attacking Simple Action in the same Action Phase. SS weapons can take advantage of the Multiple Attacks Free Action if the attacker is wielding two such weapons. Single Shot weapons include bolt-action rifles, single-action revolvers, pump-action shotguns, lever-action rifles, and some large weapons that need extra time to chamber a fresh round due to the cartridge's size.

Single Shot fire assumes another round is readied with each shot as long as rounds are available in the gun.

SEMI-AUTOMATIC (SA)

Semi-automatic weapons fire a round every time the trigger is pulled and automatically chamber a fresh round after each shot. Semi-Automatic weapons fire a single round with a Simple Action but cannot combine that with any other attack Action in the same Action Phase.

Semi-automatic weapons can take advantage of the Multiple Attacks Free Action if the shooter has two semi-automatic weapons. They also have the option of using a **Semi-Automatic Burst** (see below).

See **Firing Mode Table** (p. 180) for attack information.

SEMI-AUTOMATIC BURST

Semi-Automatic Burst mode is three semi-automatic shots taken in quick succession. Semi-Automatic weapons can fire a burst of three rounds with a Complex Action. With more shots going downrange they increase the chance that a bullet will hit. Semi-Automatic bursts can take advantage of the Multiple Attacks Free Action to fire at multiple targets with the same burst.

See **Firing Mode Table** (p. 180) for attack information.

BURST FIRE

Burst Fire (BF) weapons are usually SMGs or assault rifles, but some pistols and shotguns can be modified for this mode. In burst-fire mode a gun rapidly fires three bullets every time the trigger is pulled. Firing a weapon in Burst Fire mode is a Simple Action that cannot be combined with any other attack Simple Action in the same Action Phase. Burst Fire weapons can take advantage of the Multiple Attacks Free Action to fire at multiple targets with the same burst.

See **Firing Mode Table** (p. 180) for attack information.

LONG BURST

Long Burst (LB) mode is really just quickly firing in Burst Fire mode. In this mode, a gun fires two three-round bursts in rapid succession. Firing a weapon in Long Burst mode is a Complex Action. Long Burst weapons can take advantage of the Multiple Attacks Free Action to fire at multiple targets with the same burst.

See **Firing Mode Table** (p. 180) for attack information.

FULL-AUTO

Weapons that can fire in Full-Auto (FA) mode can throw bullets for as long as the attacker keeps the trigger pulled and the rounds last. Full-Auto weapons can be fired as a Simple Action, firing 6 bullets, or a Complex Action, firing 10 bullets. Full-auto weapons can take advantage of the Multiple Attacks Free Action to fire at multiple targets with the same burst.

See **Firing Mode Table** (p. 180) for attack information.

SUPPRESSIVE FIRE

Suppressive fire takes a Complex Action, uses twenty rounds of ammo, and ignores recoil. Though it may appear as a "spray and pray" technique it is in fact a combination of controlled and fully automatic bursts focused over a narrow area and directed at anything that moves. A character can suppress a triangular area projecting from the shooting character outward up to a distance of his choosing, up to the maximum range of the weapon, with a width of 10 meters at its end and a height of 2 meters. Make a (Weapon Skill) + Agility [Accuracy] Test, including bonuses for smartlink, laser sight, tracer rounds, and other gamemaster-approved modifiers, and record the hits. The suppressive fire zone lasts until the end of the Combat Turn as long as the firer does not move or commit to any other action.

Anyone in the suppressive fire zone or immediately adjacent to it takes a dice pool penalty to all actions equal to the shooter's hits, unless they are completely unaware of it (a magician using astral projection, for example).

Any character who is in the suppressed area (but not behind cover or prone), or who moves into or out of the area before the end of the suppressive fire, risks catching some flying lead. That character must make a Reaction + Edge Test (+ any dice they may get as a result of choosing to use Full Defense) with a threshold equal to the hits scored by the suppressing attacker. Note that in the test, you use your full Edge rating, regardless of whether you have spent points during the session (though you do not, of course, use burned Edge points). If the test fails, the character is hit, suffering damage equal to the

EXAMPLE

Wombat and company are in a bit of trouble. Taking a shortcut through an alley, they unexpectedly came across a party of feeding ghouls. The whole group turned tail to run, but Wombat knows the ghouls will be giving chase and decides to use suppressive fire to cover the end of the alley—just to keep the ghouls at bay while the team loads into Sir Rigs-a-Lot's van.

Wombat takes a Complex Action and makes and Automatics 4 + Agility 6 Test with the Accuracy of Wombat's weapon as the limit, which in this case is 5. He gets 3 hits.

Any ghoul that tries to exit the alley must make a Reaction + Edge (3) Test or take the base DV of Wombat's assault rifle, which is loaded with standard ammo. This effect lasts until the end of the Combat Turn or until Wombat takes a different action (like hightailing it to the van) on a subsequent Action Phase.

Two ghouls come running out of the alley and into the suppressed area. The first ghoul rolls Reaction 4 + Edge 1 and scores 2 hits. That's not enough to avoid a bullet, so he gets hit. The second ghoul chooses to use its Free Action and goes prone. He doesn't need to make a roll, he just goes prone right at the mouth of the alley.

If Wombat maintains the suppression and the first ghoul stays in the suppressed area on his next Action Phase the ghoul will have to roll Reaction 4 + Edge 1 again. If the second ghoul stands up in his Action Phase he would then have to make the Reaction + Edge roll as well.

FIRING MODE TABLE

MODE	DEFENSE MODIFIER	NUMBER OF ROUNDS USED	NOTES
Single-Shot (SS)	0	1	No Recoil
Semi-Automatic (SA)	0	1	
Semi-Automatic Burst (SB)	–2	3	
Burst Fire (BF)	–7	3	
Long Burst (LB) or Full Auto (FA) (Simple)	–5	6	
Full Auto (FA) (Complex)	–9	10	
Suppressive Fire	Duck or Cover	20	No Recoil

weapon's base Damage Value modified by any special ammunition being fired. Characters in the suppressed area who remain behind full cover or drop prone are not at risk (though they suffer the normal modifiers for being prone; see **Melee Modifiers**, p. 187, and **Ranged Modifiers**, p. 173). Characters may choose to avoid rolling and use their Free Action to go prone and avoid getting hit. If a character does not have a Free Action remaining she may use the Hit the Dirt Interrupt Action and go prone instead of getting hit. Any character who stands up or moves again before the suppressive fire stops must make a test to see if she is hit.

If multiple suppressive fire actions occur covering the same area, only the highest dice pool penalty counts against targets in or near the suppressed area, but targets must make a Reaction + Edge test against all overlapping zones, taking damage from the ones missed. Reaction + Edge Tests in this situation are subject to the diminishing pool effect of being shot by multiple attackers in a single Action Phase. After each roll apply a -1 die penalty to the defender's dice pool.

SHOTGUNS

Shotguns described in the **Street Gear** section (p. 429) fire slug rounds. Characters can load them with shot rounds, but shot rounds have little effect against 21st-century body armor. To determine the damage done by shot rounds, apply the flechette ammunition rules to the Damage Value indicated for the weapon.

Shot rounds spread when fired, creating a cone of shot extending outward from the shotgun's muzzle. This allows the shot to hit multiple targets, but with reduced effectiveness due to the spread of the shot pellets over a wider area. The mechanism that controls this spread is called the choke.

The shotgun user can set his weapon's choke for a narrow spread, medium spread, or wide spread. Changing the choke setting requires a Simple Action (or a Free Action if the shotgun is smartlinked).

NOT ENOUGH BULLETS

If the firing character is short on ammo, reduce each of the modifiers applied by 1 for each bullet they are short.

If an attempt at Suppressive Fire doesn't have enough bullets, the width of the suppressed area is reduced by 1 meter for every 2 bullets the attack is short.

For example, Wombat attempts to fire Full Auto (Complex Action) but his Ares Alpha only has 7 rounds left. 10 bullets needed minus 7 bullets left is a 3 bullet shortage and a 3 point reduction in the –9 defense modifier, making it a –6 on defense.

Full Deck fires a Long Burst that empties the last 5 rounds from his Uzi V. Since he is 1 round short he only imposes a –4 defense penalty to his opponent.

Wombat wants to rock and roll: he uses Suppressive Fire to keep a pack of 405 Hellhounds at bay. Problem is the gun only has 13 rounds left. That is 7 rounds short and reduces the width of the suppressed area by 3 meters (7 divided by two, rounded down) at the end, making it only 7 meters.

CHOKE SETTINGS

NARROW SPREAD

The target gets -1 dice pool modifier for defense at all ranges.

MEDIUM SPREAD

At short range, you get -1 DV, targets get -3 defense, and up to two targets within a 2-meter spread can be targeted using the same roll. At medium range, you get -3 DV, targets get -3 defense, and up to three targets within a 4-meter spread can be targeted using the same roll. At long range, you get -5 DV, -1 Accuracy, targets get -3 defense, and up to four targets within a 6-meter spread can be targeted using the same roll. At extreme

range, you get -7 DV, -1 Accuracy, targets get -3 defense, and up to six targets within a 8-meter spread can be targeted using the same roll. Medium spreads cannot be used with Called Shots.

WIDE SPREAD

At short range, you get -3 DV, targets get -5 defense, and up to two targets within a 3-meter spread can be targeted using the same roll. At medium range, you get -5 DV, targets get -5 defense, and up to three targets within a 6-meter spread can be targeted using the same roll. At long range, you get -7 DV, -1 Accuracy, targets get -5 defense, and up to four targets within a 9-meter spread can be targeted using the same roll. At extreme range, you get -9 DV, -1 Accuracy, targets get -5 defense, and up to six targets within a 12-meter spread can be targeted using the same roll. Wide spreads cannot be used with Called Shots.

PROJECTILES

Ranged combat rules also apply to bows and throwing weapons. Some special rules also apply.

THROWN WEAPONS

Thrown weapons are used for a variety of different purposes. Knives, hatchets, and shuriken are intended to injure a target on impact and thus act just like projectiles in terms of attack rules. Thrown grenades are a little different and as such they have some extra rules for determining how they work.

SHURIKEN

This multi-edged airfoil throwing blade is available in many different styles. A character can ready Agility ÷ 2 shuriken per Ready Weapon action.

THROWING KNIFE

This category covers a variety of slim knives or spikes. A character can ready Agility ÷ 2 throwing knives per Ready Weapon action.

GRENADES

When throwing a grenade, choose a location as a target. Use a Throw Weapon Simple Action and make a Throwing Weapons + Agility [Physical] (3) Test modified for range and all the usual conditions. Success means the grenade lands right where you wanted. If you don't meet the threshold, the grenade scatters. The gamemaster determines scatter by consulting the **Scatter Table** (p. 182). Three hits on the test means no scatter, but it is still possible to hit the target if the scatter roll is low and the thrower got some hits (see **Determine Scatter**, p. 182). This all goes back to the old saying: "Close only counts in horseshoes and hand grenades."

Grenades are small, self-contained explosive or gas-delivery packages. They may come with a built-in timer to detonate after a pre-set amount of time (usually three seconds), a motion-sensor set to detonate on impact, or a wireless link set to detonate upon remote command. The type of detonation device determines the special rules and timing of grenade explosions.

Built-in Timer: This detonation method uses the attacker's Initiative Score as the determining factor for detonation. The grenade is thrown during the character's Action Phase and detonates in the next Combat Turn on the Initiative Score in which it was thrown minus 10, regardless of any additional changes to the thrower's Initiative Score.

Motion Sensor: Grenades using a motion sensor are extremely dangerous. Once armed (about a second after the sensor is activated) the grenade explodes after any sudden stop or change in direction, meaning hitting the wall, floor, or target. This method uses the standard Ranged Attack rules but adds an extra step if it misses the target (no net hits on the attack roll).

After a failed attack roll, the thrower must roll for scatter and the grenade scatters the full amount before exploding immediately. A glitch on the attack roll means the grenade does not detonate on initial impact but instead doubles the scatter distance and explodes. A Critical Glitch means the thrower waited too long, and the throw sets off the grenade. The grenade detonates immediately, affecting the attacker and those around him. (Warned you it was dangerous.)

Wireless Link: This is the safest way to throw a grenade in some aspects, but it also comes with some risk and effort. The thrower (or anyone else who has a mark on the grenade) can detonate it by a wireless link. This requires the attacker to have a direct neural interface to the linked device and use the Change Wireless Device Mode Free Action. This method also reduces scatter. Without a DNI the attacker must use the Change Linked Device Mode Simple Action in their next or any of their subsequent Action Phases to detonate the grenade and scatter is not reduced.

GRENADE LAUNCHERS, ROCKETS, & MISSILES

Occasionally, characters get their hands on military-grade hardware, like grenade launchers, missiles, and rocket launchers. Resolving a launched grenade, rocket, or missile attack is a two-step process. The first step determines where the projectile ends up in relation to the target (see **Determine Scatter**, p. 182). The second step resolves the effect of the projectile's explosion (see **Blast Effects**, p. 182).

When you fire a grenade, rocket, or missile you use a Fire Weapon Simple Action and roll a Heavy Weapons + Agility [Accuracy] (3) Test modified for range and all the usual conditions. Success means the launched weapon hits right where you wanted. If you don't meet

LAUNCHER MINIMUM RANGE

The shortest possible range for all launchers is 5 meters because the projectiles fired from launchers do not actually arm until they have traveled that distance. They do not detonate if they hit anything before traveling five meters—a safety feature in case of accidental misfire. Disarming this safety feature requires an adjustment to the projectile with an Armorer + Logic [Mental] (4, 10 minutes) Extended Test.

the threshold, the projectile scatters. The gamemaster determines scatter by consulting the **Scatter Table**.

PROJECTILE TRIGGERS

Much like thrown grenades, projectile explosives have a variety of triggering mechanisms. Timers, wireless detonators, and impact triggers/motion sensors can all be used with projectile explosives. All methods still utilize the scatter rules (if a bit modified for the motion sensor) since these weapons all have some inherent level of inaccuracy.

Built-in Timer: This detonation method uses the attackers Initiative Score as the determining factor for detonation. The weapon is launched during the characters Action Phase and detonates in the next Combat Turn on the same Initiative Score in which it was fired minus 10, regardless of any changes to the attacker's Initiative Score.

Motion Sensor: Projectile explosives using a motion sensor or impact trigger are extremely dangerous. Once armed (after the projectile has traveled 5 meters unless the safety features are disarmed), the projectile explodes after any sudden stop or change in direction, meaning hitting the wall, floor, or target. This method uses the standard Ranged Attack rules but adds an extra step if it misses the target (no net hits on the attack roll).

After a failed attack roll, you must roll for scatter and the projectile scatters the full amount before exploding immediately. A glitch on the attack roll means the projectile does not detonate on initial impact and scatters further, double the scatter distance. A Critical Glitch means the arming mechanism misfires and the explosive detonates immediately, affecting the attacker and those around him. (Did we mention these things are extremely dangerous?)

Wireless Link: This is the safest way to launch a weapon but requires a little extra effort. The firer (or anyone else who has the projectile subscribed to their PAN) can detonate the projectile wirelessly. This requires the attacker to have a direct neural interface to the linked device and use the Change Wireless Device Mode Free Action. This method also reduces scatter. Without a DNI the attacker must use the Change Linked Device Mode Simple Action in their next or any of their subsequent Action Phases to detonate the projectile, but the scatter distance is not reduced.

DETERMINE SCATTER

If the attacker misses their intended landing spot, the gamemaster must determine the projectile's scatter. The gamemaster determines the direction of the scatter by rolling 2D6 and consulting the **Scatter Diagram**. The 7 arrow indicates the direction of the launch, so a result of 7 means the projectile continued on past the target, while a result of 12 or 2 means the projectile scatters back in the direction of the attacker.

Having determined the direction of the scatter, the gamemaster calculates the distance. The **Scatter Table** indicates a number of dice rolled based on the projectile, which is reduced by the number of hits the attacker rolled. This is used to determine the final scatter distance. If the scatter distance is reduced to 0 or less, the projectile hits the target exactly. (Note that additional hits do not add to Damage Values).

SCATTER DIAGRAM

SCATTER TABLE

TYPE	SCATTER
Standard Grenade	(1D6 – Hits) meters
Aerodynamic Grenade	(2D6 – Hits) meters
Grenade Launcher	(3D6 – Hits) meters
Missile Launcher	(4D6 – Hits) meters
Rocket Launcher	(5D6 – Hits) meters

BLAST EFFECTS

Grenades, rockets, and missiles are area-effect weapons, meaning that their blast affects a given area and any targets within it. The farther away the target is from the explosive's final location—the blast point—the less damage it takes, because distance reduces the effect of an explosive's blast.

Different grenade, rocket, and missile types lose blast effect at different rates. Consult the **Grenades/Rockets/Missiles Table** (p. 435) to find the projectile's Damage Code and Damage Value reduction rate.

BLASTS IN A CONFINED SPACE

When a grenade detonates in a confined space, such as a hallway or room, the gamemaster must first determine whether any barriers (usually walls) stood firm against the explosion. Consult the **Destroying Barriers** rules (p. 197). If the walls or doors hold up, the blast is channeled. Otherwise, determine blast effects normally.

If the walls hold, the shock wave reflects off of them, continuing back in the direction from which it came. If this rebounding shock wave maintains enough Damage Value to reach a character, that character is subject to the appropriate blast effect. If the character is struck a second time by the shock wave (once as it headed out and again as it rebounded), the Damage Value of the blast is equal to the combined Damage Value of the two waves.

Theoretically, a detonating explosive's blast could rebound repeatedly off each of the six surfaces in a small, well-built room, raising the effective Damage Value of the blast to a value far higher than the original damage of the grenade. This is known as the "chunky salsa effect."

MULTIPLE SIMULTANEOUS BLASTS

When multiple explosives detonate at once the effects are similar to those of a blast in a confined space (more chunky salsa). When two explosions occur on the same Combat Initiative Score and both blasts effect the same character add half the value of the lower DVs to the highest DV and apply it all as a single modified Damage Value for the purposes of Damage Resistance tests. For AP calculations, use the best AP and improve it by 1 for every additional explosion.

BOWS

A bow can be straight, recurve, reflex, or compound, and they can be made of anything from wood to spring steel to the most modern composites.

Bows have minimum Strength ratings that indicate the minimum Strength a character must have to use that weapon. When attacking with a bow, a character whose Strength is less than the Strength minimum suffers a -3 dice pool modifier per point below the minimum; this penalty reflects the difficulty he would have in pulling the bow and nocking an arrow. The weapon's minimum Strength rating is also used to determine the weapon's range and damage. Calculate base damage using the lower value of either the bow rating or the arrow rating.

EXAMPLE

Cutter and his 405 Hellhound pals managed to snag themselves a devil rat and they're looking to have a little sick and twisted fun. They drop the devil rat into an old concrete sewer junction and watch it run around while they subscribe a pair of fragmentation grenades to their wireless network and then toss both of them into the concrete cylinder. The gangers climb up onto a tower for a good vantage point and then detonate both grenades simultaneously.

The cylinder is 2 meters wide and both grenades land against the rim opposite the devil rat. If the damage was just calculated from the two explosions the devil rat would face 23P (18P – 1/m (2 meters) + 9P – 1/m (2 meters)) for the grenades. Nasty.

But the blast is in a confined space, which means multiple opportunities for damage as the shockwaves bounce off the walls. The devil rat will face 23P on the initial hit, plus another 23P when the blast has reflected, plus 19P after the blast has reflected and returned, along with another 19P on that reflection. This is followed by 15P + 15P, then 11P + 11P, 7P + 7P, and finally 3P + 3P. This totals 156P. That rat has progressed beyond chunky salsa through puree and into a fine mist. If there had only been one grenade the damage would have been a mere 80P—a difference of little consequence to the devil rat.

CROSSBOWS

Modern crossbows are equipped with automatic reloading devices to allow for faster firing rates (reloading doesn't require a Ready Weapon action, unless you happen to be using a museum piece). Crossbows also feature internal magazines (m) holding up to 4 bolts. Available in Light, Medium, and Heavy sizes.

GUNNERY

The rules and modifiers for ranged combat apply to vehicle-mounted weapons. Vehicle-mounted weapons are fired using Gunnery + Agility [Accuracy] for manual operation, like door guns on mounts, or Gunnery + Logic [Accuracy] for remote operated systems. A Complex Action is required for shooting weapons mounted on a vehicle in any firing mode. Characters shooting handheld weapons follow the normal rules for ranged combat and suffer a -2 dice penalty for firing from a moving vehicle. Stationary vehicles do not confer any of these effects, though they may inflict the Firing from Cover modifier.

DRONE GUNNERY

Drones attack using their Pilot + [Weapon] Targeting autosoft rating (p. 269), limited by Accuracy. Drones must have an autosoft appropriate to the weapon they are wielding in order to attack. They cannot fire a weapon untrained.

SENSOR DEFENSE TABLE

DEFENDER	SENSOR DEFENSE TESTS
Metahuman, Critter	Infiltration + Agility [Physical]
Vehicle	Infiltration (Vehicle) + Reaction [Handling]
Drone	Pilot + [Model] Evasion [Handling]

SIGNATURE TABLE

TARGET SIZE	MODIFIER
Large and oversized vehicles (trains, construction vehicles, zeppelins, tractor-trailers, airliners)	+3
Electric-powered vehicles	–3
Metahumans, Critters	–3
Drones	–3
Micro-drones	–6

EXAMPLE

SENSOR TARGETING

Passive: Sir Rigs-a-Lot upgraded the sensor systems on his favorite MCT-Nissan Rotodrone up to Rating 5. The assault rifle mounted on the drone has an Accuracy of 4. Using the Send Message action to command the drone, Sir Rigs-a-Lot tells the drone to use passive targeting. When the drone attacks it uses its Gunnery autosoft + Pilot [Sensor] for the attack instead of Gunnery autosoft + Pilot [Accuracy], providing a boost of 1 to the limit.

Active: Sir Rigs-a-Lot is "jumped in" and controlling his rotodrone directly. He's having some trouble hitting a couple of pesky microskimmers that are bee-lining for his team and loaded with the drone equivalent of suicide vests, so he decides to get a lock on them before wasting any more ammo.

Sir Rigs-a-Lot makes a Sensor Test by rolling Perception + Intuition [Sensor] against the microskimmer's Pilot + Evasion [Handling] and scores 3 net hits. That means that when defending against Sir Rigs-a-Lot's attack, the targeted drone loses 3 dice from its Defense test. If Sir Rigs-a-Lot targets the other drone, he gets no bonus and the targeted drone may try to break sensor contact by making a Sensor Defense test. If the target is successful, Sir Rigs-a-Lot has to spend another action locking on again.

SENSOR ATTACKS

To detect a person, critter, or vehicle with sensors, the character/vehicle must make a successful Sensor Test. Characters roll Perception + Intuition [Sensor], vehicles roll Pilot + Clearsight [Sensor]. If the target is trying to evade detection, make this an Opposed Test versus the target's Infiltration + Agility [Physical] (metahumans, critters), Infiltration (Vehicle) + Reaction [Handling] (driven vehicles), or Pilot + [Model] Stealth [Handling] (drones). Since vehicle stealth is limited by the driver's ability, the dice applied for Infiltration skill should not exceed the driver's appropriate Vehicle skill. Sensors are designed to detect the "signature" (emissions, composition, sound, etc.) of other vehicles, so modifiers from the **Signature Table** apply to the detecting vehicle's dice pool.

SENSOR TARGETING

A character can use the vehicle's Sensor Attribute to help with Gunnery and has two options for doing so: passive targeting and active targeting. Both options can be used to help make the weapon more accurate and get a better lock on the defender, making it harder to avoid an incoming attack.

PASSIVE TARGETING

In passive targeting, the vehicle's Sensor attribute substitutes for the Accuracy of the weapon as the advanced targeting system makes up for any flaws in the weapon design. The attacker rolls Gunnery + Logic [Sensor]. The target's Signature modifiers are also applied as a dice pool modifier.

ACTIVE TARGETING

Active targeting uses a vehicle's Sensors to lock onto a target. To use active targeting, the character/vehicle must first make a Sensor Test to lock onto a target. This requires a Simple Action. If the character/vehicle wins the test, the net hits are applied as a negative modifier to the Defense Test on the attack. If no hits are achieved, the sensors fail to lock onto the target, and an active targeting attack cannot be made. Once a target has been locked onto, active targeting can be used against it without requiring additional Sensor Tests.

If the target vehicle somehow breaks sensor contact, a new target lock must be acquired. This can be done by using an action to Evade Detection, which is an Opposed Test using the appropriate Sensor Defense Test (see **Sensor Defense Table**).

MELEE COMBAT

Let's get ready to rrrrumble! Melee combat, in all its sword-slashing, head-bashing glory, is decided by an Opposed Test between the attacker's Combat Skill +

RANGE TABLE

DICE POOL MODIFIER	SHORT +0	MEDIUM –1	LONG –3	EXTREME –6
PISTOLS		**RANGE IN METERS**		
Taser	0–5	6–10	11–15	16–20
Hold-Out Pistol	0–5	6–15	16–30	31–50
Light Pistol	0–5	6–15	16–30	31–50
Heavy Pistol	0–5	6–20	21–40	41–60
AUTOMATICS		**RANGE IN METERS**		
Machine Pistol	0–5	6–15	16–30	31–50
SMG	0–10	11–40	41–80	81–150
Assault Rifle	0–25	26–150	151–350	351–550
LONGARMS		**RANGE IN METERS**		
Shotgun (flechette)	0–15	16–30	31–45	45–60
Shotgun (slug)	0–10	11–40	41–80	81–150
Sniper Rifle	0–50	51–350	351–800	801–1,500
HEAVY WEAPONS		**RANGE IN METERS**		
Light Machinegun	0–25	26–200	201–400	401–800
Medium/Heavy Machinegun	0–40	41–250	251–750	751–1,200
Assault Cannon	0–50	51–300	301–750	751–1,500
Grenade Launcher	5–50*	51–100	101–150	151–500
Missile Launcher	20–70*	71–150	151–450	451–1,500
BALLISTIC PROJECTILES		**RANGE IN METERS**		
Bow	0–STR	To STR x 10	To STR x 30	To STR x 60
Light Crossbow	0–6	7–24	25–60	61–120
Medium Crossbow	0–9	10–36	37–90	91–150
Heavy Crossbow	0–15	16–45	46–120	121–180
IMPACT PROJECTILES		**RANGE IN METERS**		
Thrown Knife	0–STR	To STR x 2	To STR x 3	To STR x 5
Shuriken	0–STR	To STR x 2	To STR x 5	To STR x 7
THROWN GRENADES		**RANGE IN METERS**		
Standard	0–STR x 2	To STR x 4	To STR x 6	To STR x 10
Aerodynamic	0–STR x 2	To STR x 4	To STR x 8	To STR x 15

** See Launcher Minimum Range, p. 182*

Agility [Accuracy] vs. the defender's Reaction + Intuition. Special defense options for melee attacks are described below. Net hits are added to the attack's DV. Attack and defense rolls are modified by Combat and Wound modifiers as appropriate. Situational modifiers can be applied by the gamemaster in special circumstances, but since melee combat is supposed to be a fluid battle between two close combatants, many modifiers are not necessary as they'd just hinder both equally, so save yourself the extra calculations.

REACH

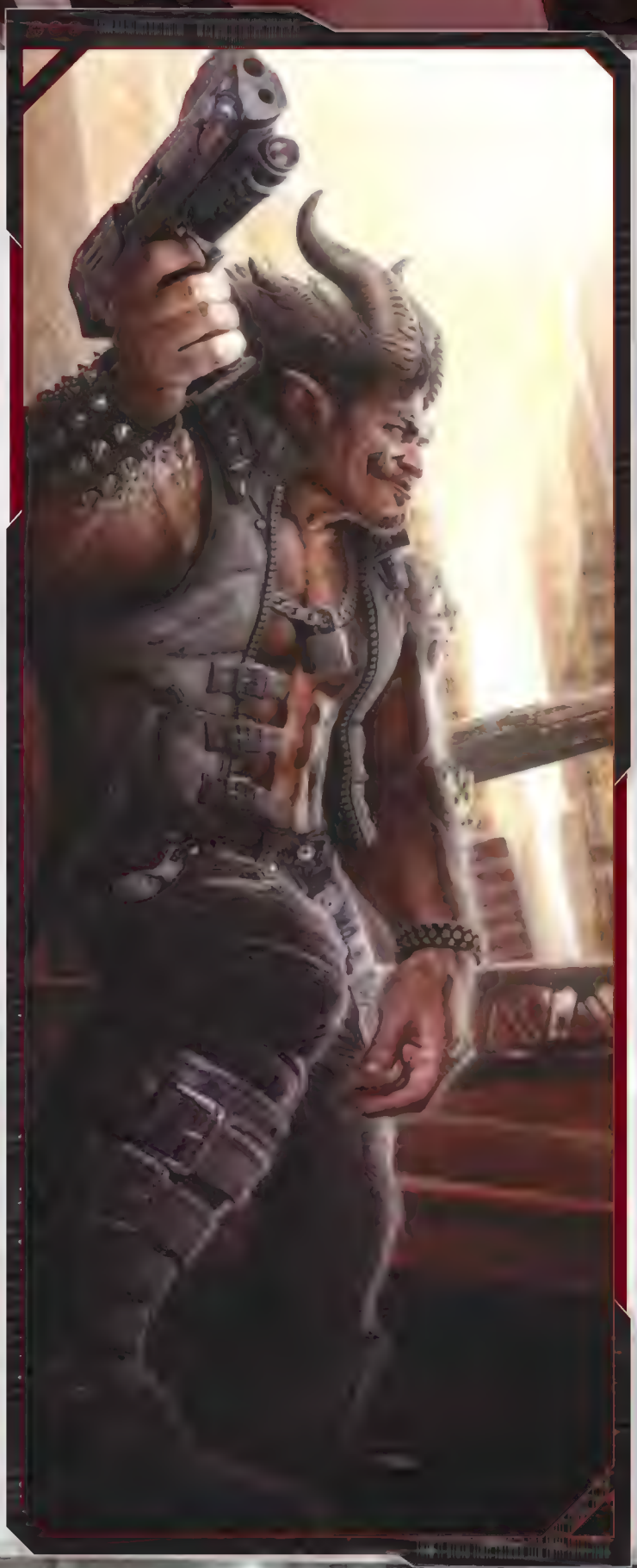
Certain weapons (or the arms of a troll) are longer and allow an attacker to hit a target from a greater distance, giving him a slight edge in melee combat. Weapons with this feature have a Reach rating between 1 and 4. When one melee fighter has a reach advantage over his opponent, compare the Reach of the two opponents and calculate the difference; this difference in Reach is applied as a modifier to the defender's dice pool, whether positive (defender has longer Reach) or negative (attacker has longer Reach). Reach does not make you better at hitting someone but it definitely makes it harder, or easier, to defend. Trolls have a natural Reach of 1 that is cumulative with weapon Reach.

ATTACKER MAKING CHARGING ATTACK

Running towards a foe makes it a lot more complicated to read just how your attack is going to land, and it puts a little extra force behind any strikes you do make. This bonus is gained on any melee attack made while the attacking character is considered running (see **Movement**, p. 161). Along with receiving this bonus, attackers can ignore the customary -2 penalty to skill checks made when running.

CHANGING DAMAGE TYPES

Sometimes all you have is a sword and you want to knock out your opponent and not kill them. In these circumstances your options are limited, as most lethal melee weapons are not designed for non-lethal attacks. When desired, the characters can use the **Called Shot** (p. 195) option to transfer damage types if the opponent is armored. If the opponent is unarmored, the attacking character can use the weapon in question as a club (with the Clubs skill) with an Accuracy of 3. Blades used as a club lose all Reach due to the need to hit with the pommel to be a club.



MELEE MODIFIERS

SITUATION	DICE POOL MODIFIER
Attacker making charging attack	+2
Attacker prone	–1
Attacker making a Called Shot	–4
Character attacking multiple targets	Split dice pool
Character has superior position	+2
Character using off-hand weapon	–2
Attacker wounded	–wound modifier
Defender receiving a charge	+1
Environmental modifiers	Use the Light and Visibility
Attacker has friends in melee	+1 or Teamwork
Opponent prone	+1
Touch-only attack	+2

ATTACKER PRONE

Fighting from down in the dirt ain't impossible but it ain't easy either. There might be good reasons for hitting from below, but if you don't stand up first, you suffer this -1 dice pool penalty. Of course, if your opponent is also on the ground, your two modifiers cancel each other out.

CALLED SHOT

This penalty applies any time a character chooses to use one of the **Called Shots** (p. 195) options on their attack. Making a Called Shot also requires a Free Action.

CHARACTER HAS SUPERIOR POSITION

Whether it's sitting over an opponent's back in a grapple, attacking from behind, attacking from above, or attacking from stable ground while the enemy fights to stay standing, having the better position is an advantage in any fight. Whenever the attacker has a significant advantage in footing, perception, or mobility, grant this +2 dice pool bonus.

CHARACTER USING OFF-HAND WEAPON

Using anything in your off-hand can make you feel like a clumsy oaf but sometimes it just needs to be done. Apply this penalty to any attack made with the characters non-dominant hand. For folks who don't put that kind of information on their character sheet assume it is the same as the player's. If the character took the **Ambidextrous** quality (p. 71) they don't have an off-hand and therefore never suffer the embarrassment of an off-hand action.

ENVIRONMENTAL MODIFIERS

The only columns from the **Environmental Modifiers Table** (p. 175) that are used in melee combat are Light and Visibility. If both combatants have the same vision systems and applicable penalties the gamemaster can decide to ignore all Environmental Modifiers and call it a wash or figure out the value and apply it universally. The gamemaster has the power.

FRIENDS IN MELEE

Having a buddy or a couple of buddies around to worry your opponent is worth something in a fight. Whenever an attacker has at least one other person in the melee with them, they gain a +1 dice pool bonus. The bonus does not increase based on the number of friends.

A second option when friends are present is to use **Melee Teamwork** (p. 188). This option offers a variable bonus (from zero to Attacker's Skill rating) but takes up the actions of teammates.

OPPONENT PRONE

Kicking someone when they are down may not be nice but it sure is effective. Besides, whoever said shadowrunners are nice? If an opponent is knocked prone, chooses to go prone, or gets subdued (see **Subduing**, p. 195) the attacker gains a +1 dice pool bonus.

TOUCH-ONLY ATTACK

If the intention of an attack is to simply make contact, whether to discharge a spell, plant a RFID tag, or just playing tag, than the attacker gains a +2 dice pool bonus. Additionally, if all that is needed is contact, the attacker and not the defender succeeds on a tie.

MELEE DAMAGE

Unarmed melee damage is (STR)S. All other Damage Values are listed as part of weapon statistics.

MULTIPLE ATTACKERS (GANGING UP)

Sometimes attackers prefer to strike with numbers on their side. When this happens the attackers have a few options for utilizing their advantage.

SIMPLE BONUS

The simplest option is for an attacker to take the Friends in Melee modifier. This modifier provides a +1 dice pool

bonus for the attacker as long as they have an ally engaged in the same melee. This is a single bonus, no matter how many allies are in the fight. For a chance at a better bonus you need to use Melee Teamwork (below).

MELEE TEAMWORK

The rules for teamwork can be used by a group of attackers to bring down a more powerful or more highly skilled foe. On their Action Phase, an attacker can choose to aid her allies. The attacker takes a Complex Action and makes an Opposed Test using her Combat Skill + Agility [Accuracy] with all appropriate modifiers, including the Ally in Combat modifier, against the opponent's Intuition. Hits from this test are added as a positive dice pool modifier for the next ally to attack the same opponent. The next ally can also use these hits as a bonus on their own teamwork test, hoping to build the amount of hits they are passing on to the eventual attacker.

Three teamwork attacks can be made before a standard attack must be made.

EXAMPLE

MELEE TEAMWORK

Wombat, Caster, and Full Deck ran afoul of The Caesar, leader of the Legion and owner of The Arena, a nightclub-com-fighting-pit in the Barrens. They got tranqed and woke up in his holding cells. Long story short, they have been dropped into the pit at The Arena opposite a genetically enhanced Bengal tiger. Caster and Full Deck know full well they aren't going to be able to do much against such the beast, so they forget about trying to punch the tiger and instead work to harry it and give Wombat a better chance for a good opening.

On their Action Phases, Caster and Full Deck both decide to use Melee Teamwork. Caster goes first and manages only 1 net hit. That 1 hit is added to Full Deck's teamwork attack; unfortunately, he manages only 1 hit and does not increase the bonus being passed along. That means when it gets to Wombat's attack he only gets 1 extra die on his attack this Action Phase.

Wombat hits the tiger for some damage, but it's not down yet, so the combat moves on to the next Action Phase. On this phase, Caster gets 4 hits, which Full Deck uses. Once again, Full Deck only comes up with 1 hit again, giving Wombat only 1 extra die. If Wombat had been next, he could have used Caster's 4 hits instead of letting Full Deck squander them, but that's not what happened and there's still a tiger in the pit.

DEFENDING IN COMBAT

Regardless of whether they're being shot at or are locked in a knife fight, characters usually have a chance of avoiding or defending against incoming attacks before they connect—unless of course they are caught by surprise (see **Surprise**, p. 192). This section offers a few extra options to avoid getting bloodied or bruised in such situations.

Note that even stationary or inanimate targets may have a defense dice pool if they have Partial or Good cover.

RANGED DEFENSE

A defender has two choices for defending against ranged attacks. The defending character can perform the standard Reaction + Intuition Test for free. The defender can also choose to go on **Full Defense** (p. 191) and decrease his Initiative Score by 10 to gain a bonus on their Defense Test equal to their Willpower for the whole Combat Turn.

See **Active Defenses** (p. 190) for example.

MELEE DEFENSE

A defender has five choices for defending against melee attacks; one is free; three are Interrupt Actions that reduce his Initiative Score by 5; and one is an Interrupt Action that subtracts 10 from his Initiative Score.

The character can perform the standard Reaction + Intuition Test for free.

If the character has a melee weapon in hand, he can **Parry** (p. 191) the attack and roll Reaction + Intuition + appropriate Melee Weapon Skill [Physical] as his Defense test. If his hands are empty and he has the Unarmed Combat skill, he can **Block** (p. 192) and roll Reaction + Intuition + Unarmed Combat [Physical] as his Defense test. Or he can **Dodge** (p. 191) and roll Reaction + Intuition + Gymnastics [Physical] as his Defense test. These three, Parry, Block, and Dodge, each reduce his Initiative Score by 5 and only work for one defense test.

If the defender chooses to go on **Full Defense** (p. 191), he subtracts 10 from his Initiative Score to boost his Defense test by an amount equal to his Willpower for the Combat Turn.

Full Defense and Block, Dodge, or Parry can be used in conjunction with each other.

See **Active Defenses** (p. 190) for example.

DEFENDER INSIDE A MOVING VEHICLE

If the defender is inside a moving vehicle he gains +3 dice to his defense.

DEFENSE MODIFIERS TABLE

SITUATION	DICE POOL MODIFIERS
Defender inside a moving vehicle	+3
Defender prone	–2
Defender unaware of attack	No defense possible
Defender wounded	–wound modifiers
Attacker has longer Reach	–1 defense per point of net Reach
Defender has longer Reach	+1 defense per point of net Reach
Defender Receiving a Charge	+1
Defender has defended against previous attack	–1 per previous attack

SITUATION	DICE POOL MODIFIERS
Attacker firing flechette shotgun on narrow spread	–1
Attacker firing flechette shotgun on medium spread	–3
Attacker firing flechette shotgun on wide spread	–5
Attacker firing full-auto (Complex)	–3
Attacker firing long burst or full-auto (Simple)	–5
Attacker firing burst or semi-auto burst	–2
Defender in melee targeted by ranged attack	–3
Defender running	+2
Defender/Target has Good Cover	+4
Defender/Target has Partial Cover	+2
Targeted by area-effect attack	–2

ATTACKER HAS LONGER REACH

The net Reach difference, after comparing that of the attacker and defender, acts as a negative modifier for the Defense test.

DEFENDER HAS LONGER REACH

The net Reach difference, after comparing that of the attacker and defender, acts as a positive modifier for the Defense test.

DEFENDER RECEIVING A CHARGE

If the defender has a Delayed Action to use against a charge they gain a +1 to his defense against a charging attacker (see **Attacker Making Charging Attack**, p. 186).

DEFENDER HAS DEFENDED AGAINST PREVIOUS ATTACKS

If a character has defended against at least one other attack since his last Action Phase, apply a -1 cumulative modifier for each additional defense roll.

DEFENDER PRONE

Characters who are on the ground have a more difficult time getting out of the way and suffer a -2 dice pool modifier. This modifier does not apply to defending against ranged attacks unless the attacker is extremely close (5 meters or less).

DEFENDER UNAWARE OF ATTACK

If the defender is unaware of an incoming attack (he does not see the attacker, the attacker is behind him, or he is surprised), then no defense is possible. Treat the attack as a Success Test instead. This does not apply to defenders who are already engaged in combat (see **Character Has Superior Position**, p. 187). If the defender is behind cover, the defense dice pool is determined by the cover, according to the **Defense Modifiers** table.

DEFENDER WOUNDED

Wound modifiers apply if the defender has taken damage (see **Wound Modifiers**, p. 169).

FIRING FLECHETTE ON NARROW SPREAD

The wider the spray of flechettes thrown at a character, the harder it is to avoid them. This keeps things relatively concentrated, though, so defending characters suffer a -1 modifier if the attacker is using a shotgun set on narrow spread.

FIRING FLECHETTE ON MEDIUM SPREAD

This widens the spread of ammo out a bit, making them even more difficult to avoid. Defending characters suffer a -3 modifier if the attacker is using a shotgun set on medium spread. Medium spreads cannot be used with **Called Shots** (p. 195).

FIRING FLECHETTE ON WIDE SPREAD

With this setting, ammo fills the air, making it a challenge to escape unscathed. Defending characters suffer -5 modifier if the attacker is using a shotgun set on wide spread. Wide spreads cannot be used with **Called Shots** (p. 195).

ATTACKER FIRING FULL AUTO BURST (COMPLEX)

The more bullets thrown at a character, the harder it is to avoid them. Defending characters suffer a -9 modifier against ten-round Full-Auto bursts.

ATTACKER FIRING LONG BURST OR FULL-AUTO (SIMPLE)

Just what was said above, though fewer bullets in the air decrease the stress and likely blood loss on a runner. Defending characters suffer a -5 against Long Bursts and Full-Auto (Simple).

ATTACKER FIRING BURST OR SEMI-AUTO BURST

The number of bullets drops again, but the challenge to not let them hit you remains. Defending characters suffer a -2 dice pool modifier against Burst Fire and Semi-Auto Bursts.

DEFENDER IN MELEE TARGET OF RANGED ATTACK

When a defender is putting all his attention on the attacker trying to take him out up close and personal, he loses perspective on incoming ranged attacks. This means a -3 dice penalty to his Defense test due to the distraction.

DEFENDER RUNNING

Serpentine! If the defender is currently considered running, i.e., if they ran in their previous action, they gain a +2 bonus to their Defense test.

DEFENDER/TARGET HAS GOOD COVER

If the Defender uses a Take Cover action to get behind something where more than fifty percent of the defender's body is obscured by intervening terrain or cover, he gains a +4 dice pool modifier to his Defense roll against any attack. This modifier can also apply to prone targets that are at least twenty meters away from their attackers. This modifier is applicable to both Ranged Combat and Spellcasting.

Note that this modifier does not negate the Blind Fire modifier the attacker suffers. Both the modifiers to the attacker and to the defender would apply when firing at a target that is totally concealed (one hundred percent behind cover).

DEFENDER/TARGET HAS PARTIAL COVER

If the Defender uses a Take Cover action to get behind something where more than twenty-five and up to fifty percent of the defender's body is obscured by intervening terrain or other forms of cover such as brush, foliage, or various obstacles (crates, windows, doorways, curtains and the like), he benefits from a +2 modifier to his Defense Test. Note that this modifier applies to all Ranged Combat tests and also against incoming Indirect Combat Spells that allow a Defense Test.

TARGETED BY AN AREA-EFFECT ATTACK

Dodging explosions is not as easy as it seems in the movies. Apply a -2 modifier when trying to defend against weapons like spells, grenades, rockets, or missiles with a blast or area effect.

EXAMPLE

SHOOTING INTO MELEE

So the defender gets a penalty for not being able to pay attention to ranged attacks when he's in a melee fight, but the attacker doesn't take a penalty for the increased difficulty of shooting into a mass of bodies. Doesn't seem fair, right? So here's where we even the playing field a little. If the defender gets more successes on the Opposed Test for the gun shot, the attacker's allies in melee need to make Defense Tests with all the same penalties, including the Defender in Melee penalty, against the attacker's initial hits. If everybody avoids the shot, yay for everybody. If somebody catches the projectile, move on to damage resistance and see how pissed she'll need to be with her buddy.

What if a bunch of combatants are all battling it out in one big battle royale? Well, this is when you assign numbers and roll a die to determine who's the next one likely to take a bullet. Alternately, the gamemaster can decide who's most likely to be hit based on some factor of the fight. Or the gamemaster can say it's a total miss and move on. The gamemaster has the power.

COVER

If you attack someone in cover and you tie in the Opposed Test, you hit your target through the cover she's using. If you penetrate the barrier (see **Barriers**, p. 197), you can still do damage to your opponent.

ACTIVE DEFENSES

Sometimes you want to do a little more than duck and weave to avoid incoming attacks. For those times characters have one extra option for ranged attacks and

EXAMPLE

ACTIVE DEFENSES

Wombat finally got his wires upgraded and wants to try them out. He heads down to his favorite watering hole, the Blue Flame Tavern, and starts buying drinks for the locals, mostly NAN ex-pats. Once they are all good and boozed up he starts talking about his youth spent kicking NANers out of his neighborhood. Angry drunks start swinging, and the gamemaster calls for Initiative.

Everyone rolls for their Initiative Score to start the fight. Wombat is first with a Initiative Score of 26 thanks to his SpinRad "Totally Jacked" wired reflexes system. He's not there to hurt anyone, so he delays his action and waits for the swinging to start.

Old Oak, a Cascade Ork, spent a little time in the shadows and has an older wired system. He moves pretty fast with a Initiative Score of 14. He's next up this Initiative Pass and not shy about taking the first swing. Using a Complex Action, Old Oak makes a melee attack using Unarmed Combat + Agility [Physical] – modifiers and scores 4 hits. Wombat goes Full Defense for the Combat Turn and immediately drops his Initiative Score to 16. He adds his Willpower to the roll, so he rolls Reaction + Intuition + Willpower – modifiers for his Defense Test. He scores only 3 hits, so the ork connects, and after damage resistance Wombat takes 2 boxes of Stun Damage.

Tommy "the Crush" Kraczinski, a thick-in-the-middle troll, is up next with an Initiative Score of 12. He takes a Complex Action to swing at Wombat with a fist the size of Rhode Island and makes an Unarmed Combat + Agility [Physical] – modifiers roll, scoring 3 hits. Wombat is not willing to let that fist connect, and even though he still can use Willpower as part of his Full Defense (since that lasts for an entire Combat Turn), he decides to drop another 5 off his Initiative Score (now 11) for the Block defense to try to avoid the hurt heading his way. Wombat now defends with Reaction + Intuition + Willpower + Unarmed Combat [Physical] – 1 (for his Reach deficit) – 1 (for having defended against a previous attack) – any other applicable modifiers. He scores 7 hits which his Physical limit reduces to 5, but that's enough to let him avoid the incoming troll fist.

Blackfeather, a former Salish Ranger, rolled poorly and has an Initiative Score of 11. He's seen Wombat ducking and weaving and decides to use Full Defense as well, dropping his Initiative Score to 1. Blackfeather is on the defensive but still has an action in this Initiative Pass. He uses a Simple Action to scoop up a barstool and another to Take Aim on his next attack action.

As the Initiative Pass winds down Wombat switches to offense. He uses a Complex Action to make a melee attack but decides to make it a Called Shot with his Free Action. He goes after the troll in hopes of breaking the morale of the others and makes an Unarmed Combat + Agility [Physical] – 4 (for the Called Shot) – situational modifiers roll for 4 hits, 1 less than his Physical limit. "The Crush" rolls his Defense Test (Reaction + Intuition) and scores 1 hit. The troll rolls his Damage Resistance Test against Wombat's whopping 15S damage and only scores 3 hits. Lights out for the big guy.

As the Initiative Pass ends, everyone takes a 10-point reduction in their Initiative Scores. The Initiative Score standings are now Blackfeather –9, Old Oak 4, and Wombat 1, while "the Crush" is down for the count. Old Oak is up first in the second Initiative Pass. He takes a swing, connects, but fails to injure Wombat thanks to the runner's armor.

Wombat goes next and sees Blackfeather as the greater threat (even though he hasn't taken a single swing). He unloads on the wily former Ranger, but Blackfeather already has his defenses up. He may like to Parry the attack, but his Initiative Score is already in the negatives so he can't. He rolls Reaction + Intuition + Willpower for Full Defense – modifiers and scores 5 hits. He has avoided Wombat's attack.

The fight is not over, but the early results make it look like Wombat's new wires are going to come in handy in the future.

four options for melee attacks, all of which reduce the defender's Initiative Score.

FULL DEFENSE

A character may increase their focus on defense against any form of attack at any point in a Combat Turn, so long as the character is not surprised (see **Surprise,** p. 192). This means a character does not necessarily need to declare Full Defense in advance—he can instead declare Full Defense when attacked, even if it is not yet his Action Phase in the turn. Going on Full Defense is an Interrupt Action and gives the defender a bonus to his defense dice pool equal to his Willpower. The action immediately reduces the character's Initiative Score by 10, possibly preventing future actions. Dice gained from being on Full Defense last for the entire Combat Turn.

DODGE

Any character, armed or unarmed, looking for a quick, short-term boost to his melee defense can use a Dodge Interrupt Action against an attack at any point in a Combat Turn, so long as the character is not surprised (see **Surprise,** p. 192). A Dodge action allows the character to roll Reaction + Intuition + Gymnastics [Physical] as his Defense test. Note that since a skill is introduced to the Defense Test, a limit is introduced as well.

This boost only deducts 5 from his Initiative Score, but it only lasts for a single Defense Test.

PARRY

A character armed with a melee weapon and skilled in its use can gain a quick, short-term boost to her melee defense by using a Parry Interrupt Action against an in-

coming melee attack at any point in a Combat Turn, so long as the character is not surprised (see **Surprise,** below). A Parry action allows the character to roll Reaction + Intuition + (Melee Weapon) [Physical] as a Defense test. In order to use the Weapon Skill for the Defense Test, the defender has to have that type of weapon in her hand. As with Dodge, bringing a skill into the mix also means the Physical limit is applicable.

This boost only deducts 5 from her Initiative Score, but it only lasts for a single Defense Test.

BLOCK

A character skilled at Unarmed Combat looking for a quick, short-term boost to her defense can use a Block Interrupt Action against an incoming unarmed or melee attack at any point in a Combat Turn, so long as the character is not surprised (see **Surprise,** below). A Block action allows the character to roll Reaction + Intuition + Unarmed Combat [Physical] as her Defense Test. In order to use Unarmed Combat in this way, the defender needs to be empty handed. The introduction of a skill to the Defense Test also brings in the Physical limit.

This boost only deducts 5 from her Initiative Score, but it only lasts for a single Defense Test.

SPECIAL ACTIONS

SURPRISE

Sometimes things happen when you least expect them; this is doubly true in *Shadowrun*, and that can be a problem—the unexpected has a tendency to mess things up. Sometimes it's deliberate, such as an ambush on your way to a supposedly friendly meet. Sometimes it's accidental, like ducking into an alley and landing in the middle of a pack of devil rats. There's no sure way to be ready for the unexpected (if you were prepared for it, it wouldn't really be unexpected, would it?) Surprise simulates those moments you didn't see coming, and the rules of Surprise apply to all characters and critters. (Non-sentient objects like astral barriers, foci, programs, IC, and bricks, cannot be surprised. Which should not come as a surprise.)

A surprised character is caught off guard and can do little except watch events unfold. Surprise occurs on a character-by-character basis. A character walking into an ambush set by two opponents, for example, may be surprised by one of his enemies but not by the other, and not all characters in a shadowrunning team may be surprised by the same events.

Surprise normally occurs at the beginning of combat, but it is possible for it to happen within a Combat Turn if an unexpected force enters the fray.

SURPRISE AND PERCEPTION

Surprised characters are unaware that the fecal material is about to hit the air-circulation device. This normally occurs either because they failed to perceive something (e.g., they didn't get enough hits to notice the concealed sniper) or because the gamemaster decides that they didn't have a chance to perceive it (e.g., they blithely walk into a supposedly empty room and come nose-to-muzzle with a dozen smiling and heavily armed guards).

In some circumstances, gamemasters may wish to give a character the chance to be alerted that something is about to happen. The best way to do this is to make a secret Perception Test for the character. If the character is lucky, he may, for example, hear approaching footsteps, notice the smell of nic-stick vapor as he approaches the corner, or just get that tingly feeling that someone is behind him. A character who succeeds in the Perception Test is alerted in some way and receives a bonus on his **Surprise Test** (see below). Note that anyone enjoying the protection of a Combat Sense spell or Adept power always gets a Perception Test (secret or not), but they can still be surprised if they don't receive enough hits.

The surprise rules below apply to all situations, whether all the parties involved are caught off guard or whether one or more parties are intentionally ambushing others.

SURPRISE TESTS

To resolve surprise situations, all participants must make a Surprise Test, rolling Reaction + Intuition (3). Characters who have been alerted in some way receive a +3 dice pool modifier on this test. Surprise Tests do not have a Limit. Success means individuals get to act normally. Failure means characters lose 10 from their Initiative Score (either when Initiative is rolled or immediately if it occurs in the middle of the Combat Turn) and they are considered surprised until their next Action Phase. Surprised characters get no Defense Test when attacked. This can be avoided by spending a point of Edge to avoid surprise. They still lose the Initiative Score points, but they can at least use their defense rolls.

Characters who glitch on their Surprise tests may still react appropriately, but they startle in some way, such as jumping, knocking into something, or dropping something they were holding. The gamemaster determines the exact effect of the glitch.

A critical glitch on a Surprise Test means the character is completely stunned and does not act for the first Action Phase. If they are able to enter combat after that, they receive a -10 penalty for failing the Surprise Test, as well as the -10 penalty for entering combat in the middle of the fight.

AMBUSHING

Characters who plan an ambush and delay their actions while they lie in wait for the arrival or appearance of their targets receive a +6 dice pool modifier on the Surprise

EXAMPLE

SURPRISE!!!

Wombat, Caster, and Sir Rigs-a-Lot are waiting in the shadows of an alley for their double-crossing Johnson to show his gleaming smile. As the Johnson (and his two bodyguards) approach, the gamemaster has everyone make Surprise Tests by rolling Reaction + Intuition, with the runners getting a +6 bonus for waiting in ambush. The results are Wombat (5), Caster (2), Sir Rigs-a-Lot (2, glitch), Bodyguard A (3), Bodyguard B (0, critical glitch), and Mr. Johnson (2). Wombat and Bodyguard A are the only ones not surprised (so much for an ambush); everyone else is going to be taking a hit to their Initiative Score.

Since they weren't in combat, everyone rolls for their Initiative Score as normal by rolling their Initiative Dice and adding their total to their Initiative Attribute. The resulting Initiative Scores (and modifiers) are Wombat (16), Bodyguard A (16), Sir Rigs-a-Lot (13 – 10 = 3), Caster (11 – 10 = 1), and Mr. Johnson (9 – 10 = –1). Bodyguard B couldn't roll because of the critical glitch but the gamemaster thinks he could pop in later so he rolls for him anyway with both the –10 penalty for failing the Surprise Test and an additional –10 penalty for joining the Combat Turn after the first Initiative Pass (19 – 10 – 10 = –1).

When the gamemaster calls 16, Wombat and Bodyguard A go to a tiebreaker that Wombat wins by possession of an Edge Attribute. Wombat declares he's going to step out, give a witty one-liner, and shoot Mr. Johnson.

Wombat rolls for his action. The street sammy shreds the surprised Mr. Johnson, who is unable to defend himself due to his Surprise Test failure. He's done in this combat, and in pretty much anything else he had going on.

On Initiative Score 16, Bodyguard A shakes the fog from his head, quick draws his sidearm, and fires at Wombat but misses. On Initiative Score, 3 Sir Rigs-a-Lot springs into action. He steps out, foregoes the witty line, and draws his SMG to fire. But he glitched back on that Surprise Test so the gamemaster says the sight on the SMG catches on his pants pocket. Sir Rigs-a-Lot is unable to fire on his Action Phase.

On Initiative Score 1, Caster steps out and decides to blast the whole group with a Manaball. Bodyguard A gets a chance to defend, Mr. Johnson's aura has already slipped this mortal coil, and Bodyguard B is all sorts of surprised and gets no defense.

Mr. Johnson ends the first Initiative Pass by hitting the ground. Time for the next Initiative Pass.

EXAMPLE

SURPRISE, PART TWO!!!

Caster has been backed into an alley by a pack of 405 Hellhounds looking for some fun. On the Combat Turn before Caster entered the alley, the gamemaster made a secret Perception Test for Caster and got only 1 hit, which is not enough to notice the two large grey masses in the shadows at the back of the alley. With Caster's attention on the gangers, the gamemaster calls for a Surprise Test. Caster rolls Reaction + Intuition for 2 hits. The pair of shadowy masses each make tests as well and score 5 and 6 hits. The gangers get 1 and 4, so Caster and one ganger have to take 10 off his Initiative Score and can't defend themselves.

The gamemaster continues the Combat Turn with everyone in the fight. She uses the Initiative Scores already in place for the fight and rolls two more for the mysterious newcomers. He reduces the Initiative Scores of the newcomers (a pair of hellhounds) by 10 for entering on the second Initiative Pass.

Caster had the highest Initiative Score but lost 10 points, and he is now behind the hellhounds. The first hellhound attacks Caster. The newcomer steps into the light to reveal its coal-black fur and red eyes, and it spews fire from its mouth.

Caster failed on the Surprise Test and gets no Defense Test as he is considered unaware of the attacker. His armor better have some fireproofing on it. Especially when the second hellhound steps up to add his fire to the Caster-roast. Caster decides to spend a point of Edge and get a defense against them. Hopefully he'll end up singed instead of flambéed.

Test. Ambushing characters are automatically not surprised by the characters they are ambushing—assuming they are aware of the movement and actions of their target(s), such as an ambush on open terrain. If the ambusher is unaware of his prey's activities (for example, he is waiting for someone to enter the room, waiting for the target to exit a bank, watching for a spirit to materialize, etc.), the ambusher still receives the +6 modifier, but he must check for surprise as well, as he may not be ready or may be temporarily distracted when the target comes into sight.

Note that if an ambushed character manages to come through the Initiative roll with a higher score than those who set the ambush, they can get the drop on their ambushes and act first.

SURPRISE IN COMBAT

Surprise may also occur within a combat that has already started. A runner team may, for example, get chased into an alley where a pack of barghests are happily dining on their latest victim. Whenever new characters are

unexpectedly introduced to a combat situation, the gamemaster should order a Surprise Test for all characters, both those already engaged in combat and the ones just entering. If any characters are surprised, adjust Initiative Scores, return to the regular Combat Turn, and remember that surprised characters cannot make defense rolls during this Action Phase.

EFFECTS OF SURPRISE

Characters who are surprised cannot take any actions that directly affect, impede, or counteract characters who are not surprised. This means surprised characters cannot attack the non-surprised characters, nor can they dodge or defend against attacks from those characters; the surprised character cannot react to the other characters' actions in any way. The surprised character can, however, carry out other actions that are not specifically directed at any surprising characters, such as dropping prone or readying a weapon (but not firing it).

Note that this affects would-be friendly actions, too. A character caught in an ambush situation may not react to his friend's warning to duck, for example, if they failed their Surprise Test.

INTERCEPTION

If movement takes a character within one meter (+1 meter per point of Reach) of an opponent, and the character attempts to pass by without attacking that opponent, that opponent can use an Interrupt Action and voluntarily decrease their Initiative Score by 5 to make a melee attack. This rule also applies to characters who are attempting to move out of melee combat. If the opponent has a melee weapon ready, he uses his normal melee weapon skill rating; otherwise, he uses the Unarmed Combat skill. If the character is wielding a firearm they may choose to use the weapon as a club and attack with the Club skill. This attack follows all of the normal rules for **Melee Combat** (see p. 184).

If, after their Resistance Test, the character attempting to pass takes damage equal to their Body, he is intercepted and cannot continue his movement.

Prone combatants cannot intercept.

With a little room to move, agile characters can avoid the Interception attempts of their opponents without engaging in combat. Using a Complex Action with their movement, they can make an Agility + Gymnastics (1) [Physical] Test. Each hit above the threshold allows the character to move past one opponent.

KNOCKDOWN

Characters who take damage may be knocked down by the attack or its staggering effects. If a character takes a number of boxes of damage (Stun or Physical, after a Damage Resistance Test) from a single attack that exceed his Physical limit, then the attack automatically knocks him down (this acts as a forced, free Drop Prone action). Any character who takes 10 or more boxes of damage after a Resistance Test in a single attack is always knocked down.

Certain less-than-lethal weapons are specifically designed to knock a target down. Gel rounds, for example, reduce the Physical limit of a character by 2 when comparing it to the DV to determine knockdown.

A character making a melee attack may attempt to intentionally knock his opponent to the ground by using a **Called Shots** (p. 195).

EXAMPLE

Doctor Love just saw Full Deck's HeartyBoy bio-monitor go berserk, and he knows he needs to get over and check out the decker. Problem is there is quite a melee between guards and his team taking place between where he is currently and where his would-be patient is at the other end of a narrow hallway. But he's a dedicated physician and decides to make the run anyway.

While Doctor Love attempts to move by the first brawl, the guard takes a swing at him with his stun baton. After the standard melee attack and defense rolls, the doc manages to dodge the guard's swing completely. He can keep moving.

He has to move past another guard who also thinks taking a swing at him is a good idea. This time the melee attack connects and does 2 boxes of Stun damage. Doctor Love's Body is 3, so the attack is not enough to stop him. Doctor Love is able to reach Full Deck.

EXAMPLE

Wombat has a DocWagon HTR officer wielding a stun baton standing between him and getting clear of the corporate office where he just severely beat a DocWagon Platinum client. He's got nothing against the HTR officer, so he draws his Manhunter loaded with gel rounds and plants one square in the goon's chest.

The HTR officer has a Physical limit of 6. The shot deals 5 boxes of Stun damage after the officer's Damage Resistance Test. Since it's a gel round the HTR officer's Physical limit is treated as two less compared to the damage, so it's 4. The HTR officer is flat on his back while Wombat clears out.

SUBDUING

Sometimes, characters need to subdue an opponent without beating them into unconsciousness. To do so, the attacker must engage in subduing combat.

To subdue a character, resolve melee combat normally using the Unarmed Combat skill. If the attacker successfully hits, compare his Strength + net hits to the defender's Physical limit. If the attacker's total exceeds the defender's Physical limit, the attacker grapples and immobilizes the defender. This subduing attack causes no damage to the defender.

To break out of the lock, the defender must take a Complex Action and succeed in an Unarmed Combat + Strength [Physical] Test with a threshold equal to the net hits scored on the attacker's original grappling test. Otherwise the defender remains subdued and cannot take any actions requiring physical movement. Consider the subdued character to be prone for any attacks made against him. The grappling character does not need to make any tests to maintain the grapple, but he must spend a Complex Action on each of his Action Phases to hold the position. The grappler may also choose to do one of the following on each Complex Action he spends to maintain the grapple:

- Make an additional Unarmed Combat Attack Test to get a better grip. The defender opposes as normal. The attacker gets the Superior Position bonus (+2). If the attacker scores more hits, the net hits are added to his previous grappling net hits, making it harder for the defender to break free. If the defender scores more hits, however, reduce the attacker's net hits by the defender's net hits to show how the attacker's grip is slipping.
- Inflict Stun Damage on the character with a Damage Value equal to his Strength. This requires no test, but the defender resists it as normal. Armor applies.
- Knock the defender down, following the rules for Called Shots. The attacker gets the Superior Position bonus (+2).

EXAMPLE

Full Deck has come under the influence of a Control Actions spell, and Wombat needs to stop his teammate before he does something stupid. Like shoot Sir Rigs-a-Lot.

Wombat uses a Complex Action to make a melee attack. Wombat rolls Unarmed Combat 4 + Agility 6 – Wound Modifier 1 – Light Modifier 1 for 8 dice. He gets 6, 6, 6, 5, 5, 5, 5, 1 for a whopping 7 hits. Due to Wombat's Physical limit of 5, only 5 of the 7 hits count. Full Deck defends by rolling Reaction 2 + Intuition 4 – Light Modifier 1 – Situational Modifier of 2 for resisting the spell effect for a total of 3 dice. A roll of 5, 4, 2 gives him 1 hit. Subtracting Full Deck's defense hits (1) from Wombat's attack hits (5) leaves 4 net hits.

Now we add the 4 net hits to Wombat's Strength (5) and compare the total (9) to Full Deck's Physical limit (3). Wombat wins, and Full Deck is immobilized.

On Wombat's next Action Phase he must spend a Complex Action to keep the hold going, but he can tighten his grip with another Unarmed Combat attack, start inflicting damage on Full Deck (if he wants to be nasty), or try to knock the decker to the ground.

On Full Deck's next Action Phase his only option for freedom is using a Complex Action and making an Unarmed Combat 2 + Strength 2 [Physical 3] Test with a threshold of 4, which was the net hits on the attack. Without spending Edge on the roll, he can't break free.

Sir Rigs-a-Lot is safe for now.

CALLED SHOTS

Sometimes, just taking a normal shot isn't enough, and an attacker wants to do something specific with their attack. This section offers different options for calling a shot, though gamemasters can choose which of these options to allow in their game.

All called shots incur a -4 dice pool penalty and cost a Free Action in addition to their basic attack action.

Blast out of Hands: You knock an item out of your target's hand, but the target takes no damage. Attacks intended to disarm suffer the normal -4 dice pool modifier for Called Shots as well as any other situational modifiers that apply such as wounds, lighting, or range. The defender rolls as normal. The item can be sent flying, coming to a rest (net hits - 1) meters from the defender. The item should travel in a direction away from the shooter.

Dirty Trick: Whether it's shooting the plasterboard to kick up dust or actually kicking dirt in your opponent's eyes, there are all sorts of dirty tricks you can do to get an advantage in a not-so-fair fight. If the attack succeeds with even a single net hit, your opponent takes a -4 dice pool modifier on his next action due to the distraction or disturbance.

Harder Knock: Whether it's shooting a gel round into an opponent's face or punching someone in the throat with your fist, sometimes you want an attack designed to do Stun damage to do Physical instead. This Called Shot changes the damage code on Stun-based weapons to Physical with no other change to the DV.

Knock Down (Melee Only): An attacking character may attempt to knock his opponent to the ground by bowling him over, sweeping his feet out from under him, pulling him off balance, or any similar maneuver. The attacker must declare his intention to perform a knockdown attack during the Declare Actions part of the Action Phase. The attacker makes a melee attack as normal. If he scores more hits than the defender, compare the attacker's Strength + net hits to the defender's Physical limit. If the attacker's total exceeds the defend-

er's Physical limit, the attacker knocks the defender to the ground. This knockdown attack causes no damage to the target (except maybe to their pride).

The attacker chooses whether to follow the defender to the ground (a free Drop Prone action) or stay on his feet—unless he glitches, in which case he falls as well. On a critical glitch, the attacker falls down while the defender stays standing.

Shake Up: Sometimes you just need to slow down an opponent and keep them out of the fight. These shots represent the intentional shot past the ear or skipping rounds off the ground to keep an opponent on their toes and on the run. This shot makes the target lose 5 from their Initiative Score along with their normal damage. If his Initiative Score is dropped below 0, he loses his last Action Phase for this Initiative Pass. Even if the defender completely resists all damage, as long as the shot hit, they still lose the Initiative Score.

Splitting the Damage: Sometimes an attacker really just wants to put the hurt on an opponent instead of outright killing them. If this is the case the attacker can choose to call a shot to split damage between the damage tracks. Shots like this represent things like intentionally shooting the trauma plate on an armor jacket or shooting for the thicker padding on armor clothing.

To make a Split Damage attack, the target has to be wearing armor and the attacker's AP needs to be less than that armor. So you cannot use this attack when shooting APDS at someone in armor clothing—in that situation, you just can't keep the bullet from drawing blood. If the attack is successful the damage is split between the two condition monitors; if the damage was an odd number, make the Stun Damage the higher value. If the modified total Damage Value of the attack is less than the modified Armor Value of the defense, the attack ends up doing only half damage, all of it applied to Stun.

Trick Shot: Sometimes you just need a good trick shot to make someone rethink their current life path. Shooting a nic-stick out of someone mouth, tacking an opponent's sleeve to a wall with a knife, or slicing that playing card in half in midair are all good examples that might help to get the point across that you are not one with whom to trifle.

The attacker gains a bonus on Intimidation rolls after this shot. Making an attack like this usually requires some kind of set up, so it can't happen in the middle of combat. No one is paying that much attention to whether you shot their hat off intentionally or just missed their braincage. These attacks suffer the standard -4 dice pool modifier and any other situational modifiers. Note the number of hits scored on the test. Those hits act as a positive dice pool modifier for an Intimidation Test made by the attacker or a known ally of the attacker after the shot is made.

Vitals: Standard ranged attacks are assumed to be aiming center mass (human torso, car engine, etc.) to allow for maximum chance to hit while also focusing on vital areas for damage. Calling a shot to increase damage means the shooter is aiming for a particularly vital area of the body, such as the brain, heart, or major arteries. These areas, when struck, tend to cause more serious wounds but they are smaller areas and harder to hit. Targeting a vital spot with a called shot gives you an extra +2 DV on the attack.

MULTIPLE ATTACKS

Characters sometimes want to really put on the hurting in a single Action Phase and can choose to attack more than once in a single Action Phase by using the Multiple Attacks Free Action. This action represents both attacking multiple times from a single melee weapon and attacking with two different weapons (firearms or melee). The attacker's dice pool is calculated with all modifiers (Wound, Environmental, Situational, and the full recoil of all attacks if it's a ranged attack) and then split as evenly as possible between all attacks, and each attack is handled separately. (Keep in mind as the dice pool gets smaller the chances of a glitch rise.)

Dice gained by spending Edge applies before the pool is split, while dice from both pools can be re-rolled with a single use of Edge.

The total number of attacks you can make in a single Action Phase is limited to one-half the attacker's Combat Skill.

EXAMPLE

MULTIPLE ATTACKS

Wombat's mouth has managed to piss off all three bouncers at the Blue Flame Tavern to the point they drag him into the alley for a little lesson on the value of silence. Wombat knows he won't do too well with three burly bouncers all beating on him, but he also knows his wired reflex system should let him get the first hit. He figures his best bet is to soften them up by spreading what damage he can do around and decides to attack two of them.

Wombat gets the highest Initiative Score and uses a Complex Action and his Free Action to make multiple melee attacks. He attacks by adding his Agility 6 + Unarmed Combat 4, then subtracts 1 die as a penalty for his inebriation, giving him a total dice pool of 9. He thinks that pool might be a little light, so he spends a point of Edge and gets his Edge 3 added to the pool, giving him 12 dice. He splits the pool, attacking with 6 dice on each bouncer, and he also gains the Rule of Six and can ignore his Physical limit for the attack. This might not be the best plan, but in Wombat's current imperfect mental state, it's golden.

DEAD MAN'S TRIGGER

A character may invoke the Dead Man's Trigger rule to perform one final action before dying or falling unconscious. For the character to do so, all three of the following conditions must be met:

- The character must still have at least an Initiative Score of 1 for the Combat Turn. If a character already used up all his Initiative Score, he's out of luck.
- The character must spend 1 Edge point. This just activates the Dead Man's Trigger; it doesn't add any extra Edge dice to any tests (the character may spend extra Edge, however, to augment tests as normal). If the character has no Edge left, he's out of luck.
- The character must succeeded in a Body + Willpower (3) Test. Note that this takes place after the Edge point is spent.

If the character passes all three conditions, he may perform one final action of any kind (no movement) which is resolved as normal. This action can be modified by any Free Action as well.

BARRIERS

People and vehicles have Body and Armor, while barriers have Structure and Armor. Barriers have a number of boxes in their Condition Monitor based on their size and Structure rating. Every square meter (of about 10 centimeters thickness) of material has a number of boxes equal to the Structure rating of the barrier.

SHOOTING THROUGH BARRIERS

If an attacker wants to shoot through a barrier and hit a defender on the other side, a few things need to be determined. A defender using the barrier as cover receives a defense bonus for cover. If the defender is completely hidden behind the barrier, the attacker suffers a -6 Blind Fire dice pool modifier for not being able to see his intended target, but the hidden defender is considered unaware of the attack. If the barrier between the attacker and defender is transparent, like bullet resistant glass, there is no cover or obstruction to sight, but the attack must penetrate the barrier to reach the defender (see **Penetration Weapons**, p. 198).

If the barrier takes the hit first, the gamemaster rolls Structure + Armor to resist the damage, and the structure takes any unresisted damage. If the Structure rating is exceeded by the damage it suffers, any remaining damage is transferred to the target behind the barrier.

BARRIER RATINGS

BARRIER	STRUCTURE	ARMOR
Fragile	1	2
Example: standard glass		
Cheap Material	2	4
Example: drywall, plaster, door, regular tire		
Average Material	4	6
Example: furniture, plastiboard, ballistic glass		
Heavy Material	6	8
Example: tree, hardwood, dataterm, light post, chain link		
Reinforced Material	8	12
Example: densiplast, security door, armored glass, Kevlar wallboard		
Structural Material	10	16
Example: brick, plascrete		
Heavy Structural Material	12	20
Example: concrete, metal beam		
Armored/Reinforced Material	14	24
Example: reinforced concrete		
Hardened Material	16+	32+
Example: blast bunkers		

If the weapon's modified Damage Value does not exceed the barrier's Armor rating (modified by the weapon's AP), then the weapon is simply not strong enough to pierce the barrier, and the attack automatically fails.

DESTROYING BARRIERS

If a character intends to destroy a barrier (or knock a hole in it), resolve the attack normally. Since barriers can't dodge, the attack test is unopposed. The purpose of the attack test is to generate extra hits to add to the Damage Value. If a character got no hits, then only apply the base Damage Value. The only way a character could "miss" is if he got a critical glitch on the attack test, thus proving themselves literally unable to hit the broad side of a barn. A character may use Demolitions as the attack skill if he has the proper materials and time to set charges.

Before rolling the barrier's damage resistance test, adjust the modified Damage Value to reflect the type of attack, as noted on the Damaging Barriers Table.

Resolve the Damage Resistance Test by rolling the barrier's Structure + Armor. Barriers ignore Stun damage.

Apply the remaining DV as damage to the barrier. If the total boxes of damage are greater than or equal to

DAMAGING BARRIERS

WEAPON	DV MODIFIER
Melee or unarmed	No change
Projectiles and bullets	see Penetration Weapons
Explosive in contact with barrier	base DV x 2
AV rocket/missile	base DV x 2
Combat spell	No change

EXAMPLE

DAMAGING A BARRIER

Wombat and Caster were chasing a pair of Renraku guards when the secmen duck into a lab and slam the door behind them. Neither of the shadowrunners are particularly skilled at lockpicking, so they each decide on more dynamic methods for getting through the door.

The security door is made of reinforced material and is 1 meter by 2 meters (Structure 8, Armor 12, 16 boxes on the Condition Monitor for the door).

Wombat pulls up his trusty AK-97, toggles the safety to full-auto, and starts to rock and roll on the door and wall. The AK's base damage is 9P, and Wombat scores 6 hits (though he is limited by the AK's Accuracy of 5). That makes a modified damage value of 14P (9 base + 5 net hits). The modified Damage Value of the attack exceeds the Armor rating, and referencing **Penetration Weapons** shows that the attack does 1 box of damage to the barrier while the primary damage goes right through, meaning the guards on the other side must duck for cover as bullets start flying through the lab.

Caster knows how futile using bullets on a door is, and instead he prepares a Shatter spell to rock the door off its hinges. He lays his hand against the metal door and casts. Caster knows it will take a lot so he puts his maximum potential behind the spell and casts at Force 12. Caster scores a whopping 10 nets hits and consults the Damaging Barriers table to see combat spells have no change to damage. He hits the door with 10 boxes (14 total, thanks to the hit from the bullets), and the gamemaster declares the center of the door is gone, leaving just the top and bottom attached to the hinges. The way is not totally clear, but at least now they can see the guards.

EXAMPLE

SHOOTING THROUGH A BARRIER

Wombat is hunkered down behind a concrete barrier reloading his Ares Light Fire 70. An Ares security goon makes his best guess where Wombat is and takes a shot with his Defiance T-250. With the Blind Fire penalty, he only has 4 dice but scores 2 hits.

Since Wombat is behind the cover, the barrier takes the hit first. Base damage is 9P, modified by the 2 hits to 11P. This is far less than the Armor rating of the concrete, which is 20, so the shot stops dead.

When Wombat moves behind a security door (Armor 12) he stops for a quick breather. The goon takes a shot and scores 3 hits this time (lucky goon). The modified DV of the attack is 12P, equal to the Armor of 12, so the shot punches through. The door takes 1 box of damage, and 11P passes through to hit Wombat.

the Structure rating, the attack has made a hole in the structure. Each hole is one square meter per increment of Structure rating. For example, an attack that dealt 30 net points of damage to a Structure 15 barrier would create a 2-square-meter hole.

PENETRATION WEAPONS

If the weapon you're using is primarily a penetrating weapon, like a firearm or a pointed sword, then the barrier takes 1 box of unresisted damage (or no damage at all at the gamemaster's discretion), allowing the rest to transfer to the target behind it. When multiple rounds are fired at a barrier, the damage increases to 2 boxes for 3 bullets, 3 boxes for six bullets, and 4 boxes for 10 bullets. Subtract this from the damage done to anyone on the other side of the barrier. This is only true for weapons whose modified DV exceeds the Armor rating of the barrier. As above, if the modified DV is less than the Armor, the attack is stopped dead with no damage to anything.

BODY BARRIERS

Someone, at some time, is going to want to use a body, living or dead, as cover or a barrier (this is experience talking). In these cases, use Body in place of Structure. Armor acts the same. Apply damage to the body before moving on to the intended target. Also of note is the difficulty of lugging a body around as a shield, as they tend to be heavy and awkward. Apply an Agility and Reaction penalty equal to the difference between the holder's Strength and the shield body's Body attribute while the metahuman shield is carried.

VEHICLES

VEHICLE COMBAT

Vehicles in the world of *Shadowrun* provide very much the same function they always have, providing a means of expedient transportation. In the context of shadowrunners in the Sixth World, vehicles provide an exciting

component that can be used to enhance a scene, or provide the entire backdrop or context of an exciting chase, fraught with imminent danger. When a scene centers on vehicles, the primary theme is *speed*. Vehicles are moving fast, the situation is changing fast, and the rules should resolve fast. To this end, the vehicle rules for the *Shadowrun* focus on resolving vehicle scenes with the same sense of pace.

VEHICLE STATS

Vehicles in *Shadowrun* are defined by a set of statistics that determine their in-game capabilities.

Handling represents the vehicle's agility and responsiveness. This value is the base limit for Vehicle Tests made where maneuverability is the most important feature.

Speed represents the maximum velocity that the vehicle can achieve—its top-end speed. This value is the base limit for Vehicle Tests that emphasize raw speed.

Acceleration defines how quickly a vehicle is able to change its current speed and close the distance between it and another moving target. The value represents the maximum number of Range Categories that the vehicle can move in a single Combat Turn.

Body represents a combination of structural integrity and size of the vehicle and its resistance to damage. Larger vehicles tend to have more open spaces that are not as high risk when being attacked. Body is used as part of the dice pool that vehicles use for resisting damage, just like a metahuman character.

Armor represents a vehicle's "toughness," its ability to take a hit and still function. This does not necessarily represent metal plating attached to the vehicle, but a general resistance to incoming attacks due to the vehicle's structural integrity snd strength. Armor is the second value (with Body) that forms the dice pool that vehicles use to resist damage.

Pilot is a rating defining the capabilities of the built-in computer piloting system with which all vehicles in the Sixth World come equipped. For any vehicle not being actively piloted by a metahuman, this takes the place of all Mental attributes and Reaction for any tests the vehicle needs to make.

Sensor is a rating representing the suite of information-gathering or detection devices that are built into every vehicle in the Sixth World. Sensor acts as the limit for Perception and other detection tests using the vehicle's systems.

As most vehicles are a bit less squishy than metahumans, they have a **Condition Monitor** equal to 12 plus half their Body (rounded up), they ignore Stun damage (though electricity-based attacks are considered Physical Damage to vehicles), and any attack where the modified DV does not exceed the Armor of the vehicle does nothing.

Drones are a different story and have a Condition Monitor equal to 6 plus half their Body.

VEHICLE TESTS

When a character is piloting a vehicle in non-combat, or everyday situations, no test is required (unless the character is Incompetent, and then hilarity ensues). However, characters in *Shadowrun* often find themselves in dangerous or extreme situations with vehicles. When that happens, the character controlling the vehicle needs to make one or more Vehicle Tests. When making a Vehicle Test, a character rolls Vehicle Skill + Reaction [Handling] Test. The threshold of the test is determined by the difficulty of the task being attempted. Gamemasters should use the Vehicle Test Threshold Table below as a guide.

VEHICLE TEST THRESHOLD TABLE

SITUATION	THRESHOLD	EXAMPLES
Easy	1	Merging, passing, sudden stop, drift or gradual turn (less than 75 degrees)
Average	2	Avoiding an obstacle, maneuvering through a narrow spot, tight turn (75-130 degrees)
Hard	3	Hairpin turn, "stoppie" on a motorbike, driving through unusual places (mall), "dog leg" or hairpin turn (greater than 130 degrees)
Extreme	4+	Jumping vehicle over an obstacle, driving through a space just big enough for the vehicle, while ramping a vehicle through the air rolling it *just enough* to have a hook from an overhanging crane knock a bomb off the bottom of the vehicle before it explodes
Driver Jumped In with Control Rig	–Control Rig rating	A rigger using a Control Rig has a much easier time controlling a vehicle she can feel.

Additionally, the terrain in which the vehicle is traveling modifies the threshold of the vehicle test. Apply a modifier to the threshold based on the Terrain Modifier Table at right.

VEHICLE SPEEDS

When it comes to getting from point A to point B, the top speed a vehicle can achieve is not as important as the driving skill, economy, local laws, and traffic between the two points. Because of this, long-distance travel speeds are listed here as an average for different modes of transportation. These speeds are broad average categories, especially for aircraft; gamemasters who want more precise information for their game can investigate real-world equivalents for top speed or cruising speed.

Foot: Moving on foot comes in two speeds over a long distance, walking and hustling. Walking is exactly that and averages about 5 kilometers per hour. Walkers and other foot traffic can travel in a relatively straight line from one point to the next in most urban and flat rural areas if they want. In the mountains or over rough terrain, the movement rate is between half and a quarter of normal. Hustling is faster but gets tiring. Double the overland speed but add in Damage Tests due to **Fatigue** (p. 172)

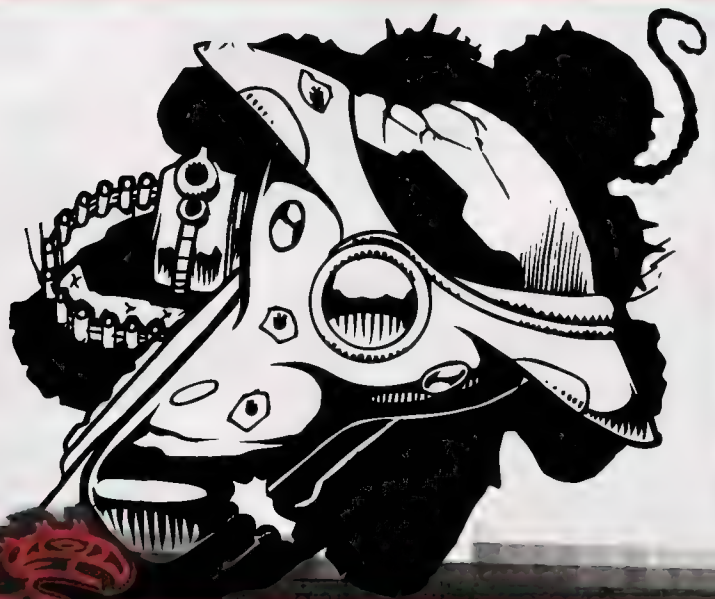
Bicycle: As odd as it sounds, traveling by bicycle is not that uncommon in downtown areas or in the barrens of larger cities. Riders can average about 25 kilometers per hour but are usually limited to streets and flat terrain. Bikes can be used off-road but only manage a quarter of the speed. Riding a bicycle for long periods or in uneven or rough terrain can cause **Fatigue** (p. 172).

Ground craft: Up until the invention of GridGuide, travel in a ground craft could be a crapshoot. Accidents, construction, variable speed limits, and traffic congestion all made getting from one spot to another take a lot longer than one would expect. With GridGuide, which is in place in most major cities and on most major highways, travel averages 80 kilometers per hour in urban environments and 120 kilometers per hour in rural or cross-country routes. Since ground craft require roads, most of the time these travel rates can be applied using real-world mapping tools (Google Maps, Mapquest, TriPlanner, etc.) and calculating driving distances.

Watercraft: From rafts to super carriers there's an almost endless variety of craft designed to move on water. Man-powered craft such as kayaks and canoes average about 3 kph in still water but only make a quarter of that when paddling against a strong current—or quadruple that when paddling with the same current. Small powerboats cruise at around 25 kph, larger powerboats cruise around 65 kph, and speedboats can cruise around 130 kph (cigarette boats go even faster, hitting cruising speeds of 200 kph). Yachts cruise at around 60 kph, and larger ships like cruise ships travel at 35 kph. The most important factor to consider when figuring out water travel times is the body of water. Rivers are rarely straight, which means travel distances will always be longer than the linear distance between points, and everything but the smallest lakes have some sort of current—the gamemaster will have to decide how those help or hinder boating runners.

Rotorcraft: Helicopters and tilt-wing aircraft usually have the advantage of flying as straight as the crow. These vehicles average around 220 kph cruising over open terrain. In urban airspace rotorcraft speed drops to about 140 kph, but the distance between locations is linear. In rural airspace tilt-wing craft can get up more speed and can increase their overland speed to 300 kph. The limiting factor for most rotorcraft is fuel.

Aircraft: Travel by air is broken down into three very broad categories, with a fourth category that only exists for purposes of determine long-distance travel times on a more commercial scale. The three broad categories are prop planes, small jets, and large jets. The fourth category includes semi-ballistics and suborbitals, but no one really flies those—they just guide their fall. Almost all planes, with the exception of VTOL craft, need an airfield or long stretch of flat ground to take off or land. Once aloft, they travel point to point in a linear path. Prop planes average around 250 kph for flight time between airstrips. Small jets average about 1,000 kph over long distances. Most are capable of much faster speeds but burn way too many liters per kilometer of expensive jet fuel to be practical for long-distance travel. Large jets, such as commercial airliners, average around 800 kph over long distances.



EXAMPLE

VEHICLES & SUPPRESSIVE FIRE

Since suppressive fire covers an area, it runs into some problems when applied to vehicles and passengers in tactical and chase combat. Suppressive fire can be used and can include all the passengers in a vehicle with the following considerations: All passengers get a defense bonus from the cover of the vehicle; and anyone choosing to Hit the Dirt does not avoid the attack but instead gains the vehicles Armor on their Damage resistance roll. Additionally if the weapon damage does not exceed the vehicle Armor it doesn't penetrate and the passengers are safe, and the driver can make a Reaction + Edge Test to get the whole vehicle, including all the passengers, out of the suppressed area.

MODIFIERS

The dice pool for the Vehicle Test can also be modified to reflect conditions other than the terrain that could interfere with the pilot's ability to do her job.

TERRAIN MODIFIERS TABLE

TERRAIN	MODIFIER	EXAMPLES
Open	0	Highways, flat plains, open sea, clear sky
Light	+1	Main street thoroughfares, rolling hills, dock areas, intra-city air traffic
Restricted	+2	Side streets, light woods, rocky mountain slopes, light traffic, shallow waters, heavy air traffic, low altitude flying over heavy terrain
Tight	+4	Back alleys, heavy woods, steep slopes, high traffic, swamp, heavy rapids, flying at street level through a city, flying through winding canyons

VEHICLE TEST MODIFIER TABLE

SITUATION	MODIFIER
Pilot has impaired Visibility	Consult Visibility column (p. 175)
Piloting in limited Light conditions	Consult Light column (p. 175)
Pilot unaware of event	No test possible
Pilot wounded	–wound modifiers from Vehicle test
Piloting damaged vehicle	–(damage modifier) Handling (minimum 1)
Pilot using Augmented Reality (AR)	+1 Handling
Pilot using Virtual Reality (VR)	+2 Handling

PILOT HAS IMPAIRED VISIBILITY

Piloting in thick fog, dense smoke, or heavy rain can limit the time a pilot has to react to incoming events. Apply the proper modifier from the Visibility column on the **Environmental Modifiers Table** (p. 175). These modifiers are mitigated and neutralized in the same way for vehicles as for other circumstances.

PILOTING IN LIMITED LIGHT CONDITIONS

It can be hard to pilot in the dark. Apply modifiers from the Light column of the **Environmental Modifiers Table** (p. 175) to the Vehicle test. These modifiers are mitigated and neutralized in the same way for vehicles as for other circumstances.

PILOT UNAWARE OF EVENT

If you don't see it coming there's not much you can do about it. Pilots who are surprised get no Vehicle Tests against anyone who Surprised the pilot to respond to actions that come out of nowhere.

PILOT WOUNDED

Pilots apply their wound modifiers to Vehicle tests.

PILOTING A DAMAGED VEHICLE

Busted vehicles just don't handle well. Apply the vehicle's damage modifier as a penalty to Handling.

PILOTING USING AR/VR

If the pilot is driving with the aid of Augmented Reality, increase the limit of any tests by 1, and if the pilot is driving using Virtual Reality, increase limits by 2. If the pilot is equipped with a Control Rig and is controlling the vehicle while Jumped In, decrease the threshold of tests by the rating of the Control Rig (to a minimum of 1).

CRASHES

Crashes should be a rare and beautiful thing in *Shadowrun* combat. They could be white-knuckle moments when a player fears his character won't survive the next few seconds, or the sudden elation of seeing a long-shot dodge pay off, sending the bad guys spinning into oblivion.

Crashes occur during Ramming actions (see **Ramming**, p. 203), when the driver on a collision course fails a vehicle test, or whenever the gamemaster says so. We know that last sounds arbitrary, but vehicle combat is fluid and fast—things change in a heartbeat, and only the gamemaster can know when the uncontrolled vehicle hits a wall, another car, or a cybered troll and goes crunch.

Vehicle crashes are rare, and though they can be spectacular in many cases they do not involve a lot of damage. When a vehicle crashes, it and any passengers must resist damage equal to the Body of the vehicle. This damage is resisted by Body + Armor - 6 AP. The damage is Stun

if the vehicle's Body (the base damage) is less than the character's Armor, and Physical if the Body of the vehicle is equal to or greater than the character's Armor.

Crashes are mentally traumatic as well. Any character caught in a crash must make a Composure (4) Test, taking a penalty to their actions equal to how many hits they missed the threshold by, for a number of Combat Turns equal to the same number.

VEHICLE COMBAT

TACTICAL COMBAT

In standard tactical combat, a vehicle is treated as an extension of the driver. This happens whenever the mode of transportation is mixed between vehicles and pedestrian combatants, such as the start of a getaway or a drive-by shooting. Movement is based on the movement rate (see **Movement Rates Table**, below) of the vehicle as determined by its Speed rating on the chart. Initiative is resolved as normal.

MOVEMENT RATES

Movement rates for vehicles are slightly different than those of metahumans. The driver of the vehicle can adjust her movement rate with the required action to control the vehicle during her Action Phase but chooses the movement rate at the beginning of each Combat Turn instead of moving by Initiative Pass. The gamemaster should use their own discretion when determining just how quickly a car can change speeds between Combat Turns.

MOVEMENT RATES TABLE

SPEED ATTRIBUTE	WALKING RATE (M/TURN)	RUNNING RATE (M/TURN)
1	5	10
2	10	20
3	20	40
4	40	80
5	80	160
6	160	320
7	320	640
8	640	1,280
9	1,280	2,560
10	2,560	5,120

ACTIONS

Drivers must spend at least one Complex Action in each Combat Turn driving their vehicle, or the vehicle is considered uncontrolled at the end of the Combat Turn. Uncontrolled vehicles are unstable platforms; all characters apply a -2 dice pool modifier to all their actions if they are in an uncontrolled vehicle. If the driver does not make a Vehicle Test to regain control of the vehicle in one Combat Turn, one of two things happens. First, if the vehicle has a Pilot rating, the vehicle's autopilot kicks in and takes the necessary Complex Action to drive the vehicle. If this happens, the autopilot system begins driving with the flow of traffic. Second, if someone has disabled the Pilot program or the vehicle does not have one, it continues to travel in its last heading and is unable to defend against any incoming attacks. It takes no actions except for slowing down, or if the accelerator is locked, maintaining speed until the gamemaster says it crashes. Vehicles being controlled by GridGuide or an autonav system are considered under the control of their Pilot program.

In most cases, using any on-board vehicle accessories (sensors, vehicle weapons, etc.) requires spending a Complex Action (though there may be some cases where only a Free or Simple Action is necessary, such as turning on/off Sensors or ECM, arming missiles, and so on).

FREE ACTIONS

CHANGE LINKED DEVICE MODE

A driver who is rigging the vehicle or has a direct neural link to it may activate or deactivate various systems such as sensors, ECM, weapons, and so on as a Free Action. The driver may also call up a status report to monitor the position, heading and speed, damage report, and/or current orders of the vehicle.

Activated sensors, ECM, and ECCM systems come online at the start of the next Action Phase, even if the character who activated the system does not have any actions due to their Initiative Score being 0 or less.

SIMPLE ACTIONS

USE SENSORS

A driver or passenger may use sensors to detect or lock onto targets.

USE SIMPLE DEVICE

This action can be used to manually activate/deactivate sensors, ECM/ECCM, weapon systems, and other onboard vehicle systems.

COMPLEX ACTIONS

CONTROL VEHICLE

This action is not really an action at all, simply the expenditure of an action to represent efforts taken for the entire Combat Turn to keep the vehicle under control. This action does not need to be taken as the driver's first action in combat, but until this action is taken, the vehicle is considered uncontrolled at the end of the Combat Turn and may crash or be taken over by the vehicle's onboard Piloting system.

FIRE A VEHICLE WEAPON

A driver or passenger may fire a vehicle-mounted weapon.

MAKE VEHICLE TEST

A driver spends a Complex Action when executing a maneuver that requires a Vehicle Test. Failed Vehicle Tests may result in the vehicle being considered uncontrolled or may lead to a second Vehicle Test to avoid a crash. Glitched Vehicle Tests almost always result in a crash. Critical Glitch Vehicle Tests always result in a crash.

RAMMING

If a driver wants to ram something (or someone) with the vehicle, treat it as a melee attack. The target must be within the vehicle's Walking or Running Rate (a -3 dice modifier applies if the driver has to resort to running). The driver rolls Vehicle skill + Reaction to attack. The target rolls Reaction + Intuition if a pedestrian, or Reaction + Intuition [Handling] if driving another vehicle. Pedestrians may use the **Full Defense** (p. 191) or **Dodge** (p. 191) Interrupt Action but not Block or Parry.

If the driver gets more hits, he rams the target. Make the Damage Resistance Test as normal. The base Damage Value of the attack is determined by the ramming vehicle's Body and speed, as noted on the Ramming Damage Table. The ramming vehicle must resist only half that amount (round up). Characters resist ramming damage with Body + Armor - 6 AP.

RAMMING DAMAGE TABLE

SPEED (M/TURN)	DAMAGE VALUE
1-10	Body / 2
11-50	Body
51-200	Body x 2
201-300	Body x 3
301-500	Body x 5
501+	Body x 10

If the ram succeeds, each driver must make an additional Vehicle Test to avoid losing control of the vehicle. The threshold for the ramming driver is 2; the threshold for the rammed driver is 3. If either driver fails, the vehicle is considered uncontrolled and cannot perform any actions until control is regained.

CHASE COMBAT

When a combat situation involves two or more parties that are **all** in moving vehicles, the Chase Combat rules are used instead of the standard combat rules. High-speed vehicle chases are incredibly fluid, with the participating vehicles constantly varying speed and position. To simulate this, the Chase Combat rules abstract a great deal of the movement involved in order to focus on the action of the chase scene. A Chase Combat Turn has the following steps:

1. Determine Chase Environment for this Combat Turn.
2. Establish relative Chase Ranges for participating vehicles.
3. Roll Initiative for all characters.
4. Take actions in Initiative order. Drivers may perform Chase Actions or regular combat actions on their turn. Passengers may only perform regular combat actions.

CHASE RANGES

Distance between vehicle (or vehicle groups) in Chase Combat is measured in **Chase Ranges**. Chase Ranges do not represent an exact or constant distance, but rather a bracket or parameters between which the precise distance varies from second to second as the vehicles jockey for position. The ranges between vehicles can be tracked on a vehicle-by-vehicle basis if precision is required, or vehicles that are coordinating their movements or otherwise acting together can be grouped and assumed to all be at the same range for faster resolution. When making a test to Change Range for vehicles grouped in this manner, one vehicle should be selected to act as the leader for the group.

There are four Chase Ranges that correspond to each environment, as seen in the **Chase Ranges Table**, p. 204.

DETERMINE CHASE ENVIRONMENT

Chase Environments define the kind of area in which the current Combat Turn of the chase is taking place. The gamemaster determines when the environment changes. A Chase Environment can either be Speed or Handling.

CHASE RANGES TABLE

RANGE	SPEED ENVIRONMENT APPROX. DISTANCE (M)	HANDLING ENVIRONMENT APPROX. DISTANCE (M)
Short	0-10	0-5
Medium	11-50	6-20
Long	51-150	21-80
Extreme	151-300	81-150

AIR AND NAVAL WARFAE

The rules presented here are primarily for land, sea, and air combat on a close scale with conventional (a.k.a. shadowrunner-level) weapons. Air-to-air combat and long-distance naval warfare will be covered in future books; generally, though, action should be focused on shadowrunner and street-level action.

If you really feel the need to have a large-scale, long-range combat, use these rules and extend the ranges out to those for assault cannons and missiles. Make sure everyone involved understands the added danger of a ram action when flying 5,000 meters in the air (if that was something they somehow overlooked).

A **Speed Environment** is a place where the movement of the vehicle is not significantly inhibited, making maneuvering minimal and high speeds possible. This could be a major highway, open field, calm waters, or clear skies. In this Environment the maneuverability of vehicles is much less important than raw speed. These environments can potentially have very long sight lines (especially on water or in the air), meaning the quarry's lead may extend beyond the 300-meter extreme range, but the pursuer is still back there and in sight.

A **Handling Environment** is a place where space is limited and quick reflexes and maneuverability are more important than speed. In Handling Environments, top speed is almost never an option. Typical environments of this nature are winding residential streets, rocky foothills and canyons, a crowded harbor, or flying at street level through a city. These tight environments should also be considered when determining modifiers for passenger actions between vehicles because pedestrians, other vehicles, buildings, and a myriad other things can get in the way of a clear shot.

CHASE ACTIONS

A driver may perform any of the following actions on their turn, as long as the target vehicle is within the Chase Range specified. All Chase Actions are Complex Actions.

CATCH-UP/BREAK AWAY (ANY RANGE)

A vehicle may wish to close the distance or get away on their action. The number of Range Categories a vehicle can change during this action is equal to their Acceleration. The driver makes a Reaction + Vehicle Skill [Speed or Handling] (maneuver Threshold) test. For every hit she beat the threshold by she may shift one Range Category towards or away from her opponent. If this action results in a move out of Extreme range the pursuing vehicle is allowed its own Reaction + Vehicle Skill [Speed or Handling] (maneuver Threshold) test to try and keep her in sight.

CUT-OFF (SHORT RANGE ONLY)

The acting vehicle makes a sudden move to cut off a target vehicle, forcing it to crash. Make an Opposed Reaction + Vehicle Skill [Handling] Test. If the acting vehicle achieves more hits, the target vehicle must make an immediate Vehicle Test to avoid crashing, with a threshold equal to the net hits on the test.

RAM (SHORT RANGE ONLY)

The acting vehicle attempts to collide with a target vehicle. Make an Opposed (Vehicle Skill) + Reaction [Speed or Handling] Test. If the Ram is taking place in a **Speed Environment** use Speed as the limit, and use Handling if the Ram is taking place in a **Handling Environment**. If the ramming vehicle achieves more hits, the vehicles have collided. The target of the Ram takes damage equal to the Body of the ramming vehicle plus any Net Hits achieved. The vehicle that did the Ramming takes damage equal to half its Body.

STUNT (ANY RANGE)

A vehicle being chased can attempt a last-second veer onto an off-ramp, tight turn into a side street, threading the needle through a tight area, or any vehicular insanity the driver thinks might shake her pursuer. When a vehicle being pursued attempts a Stunt, the gamemaster sets the threshold for the Stunt based on the environment and difficulty of the maneuver and the terrain of the chase, (see **Vehicle Test Threshold Table** and **Terrain Modifier Table**, p. 201). The driver then rolls a Vehicle Skill + Reaction [Speed or Handling] Test. If the chase is taking place in a **Speed Environment**, the limit is equal to the vehicle's Speed. If the chase is taking place in a **Handling Environment** the limit is equal to the vehicle's Handling. If the test is failed, the vehicle goes out of control. An uncontrolled vehicle could crash

(causing damage to it and all passengers (see **Crashes**, p. 201), slow down (allowing all following vehicles to gain a Chase Range Category), or suffer any other consequences the gamemaster deems appropriate.

If the threshold is equaled or exceeded, the maneuver is successful and all pursuing vehicles must immediately make a Vehicle Test at the same threshold in order to maintain pursuit range. If any pursuing vehicle fails, it falls behind by one Chase Range Category; if the pursuer is already at Extreme Range, the fleeing vehicle escapes pursuit. The gamemaster determines if the pursuer is able to reacquire the target after that.

PASSENGER ACTIONS

When involved in a Chase Combat, passengers in any of the participating vehicles may take individual actions. However, performing any sort of attack on targets outside of a vehicle while it is maneuvering unpredictably or moving at high speeds is very difficult. If you attempt to attack a target outside the vehicle while using a weapon not mounted to the vehicle, you suffer a -2 penalty to all attack rolls.

ATTACKS AGAINST VEHICLES

When a vehicle is attacked in combat, the driver rolls his Reaction + Intuition as the defense part of the Opposed Test. Drones roll their Pilot + Autosoft [Handling]. See also **Rigging and You**, p. 266 for tests performed while jumped in.

VEHICLE DAMAGE

Whenever a vehicle is hit by an attack, it resists damage as normal, rolling Body + Armor. If the attack's modified DV is less than the vehicle's modified Armor, no damage is applied. Note that since many vehicles have large Body dice pools, gamemasters are encouraged to use the trade-in-dice-for-hits rule (4 dice equals 1 hit) to simplify tests. Your average tank, for example, will automatically get 4 hits on a Body Test through that trade in, so there is no point in rolling unless the tank needs more than 4 hits.

EVASIVE DRIVING (DEFENSE)

Vehicles that are under attack can use a Free Action and undertake evasive driving—the vehicle equivalent of **Full Defense** (p. 191). This means the driver of the vehicle reduces their Initiative Score by 10 and can add a number of dice equal to their Intuition to the defense dice pool to dodge attacks. Evasive driving cannot be used against ramming attacks.

CALLED SHOT ON VEHICLES

Called shots against vehicles follow the same rules as for **Called Shots**, p. 195. Another option, however, is available to the attacker if the called shot succeeds. The attacker can choose to target and destroy any specific component of the vehicle: window, sensor, tire, etc. The gamemaster determines the exact effect of this called shot based on the DV inflicted. In most cases, the component will simply be destroyed. Shot-out tires inflict a -2 dice pool modifier per flat tire to Vehicle Tests. Note that the attacker is calling a shot at the vehicle and not a passenger (see **Damage and Passengers** below for rules on targeting passengers).

DAMAGE AND PASSENGERS

Attacks must specifically target either the passengers (in which case, the vehicle is unaffected) or the vehicle itself (in which case, the passengers are not affected). The exceptions to this rule are ramming, suppressive fire, and area-effect weapon attacks like grenades and rockets—these attacks affect both passengers and vehicles.

If an attack is made against passengers, make a normal Attack Test, but the passengers are always considered to be under Good Cover (this is in addition to the +3 modifier for being inside a moving vehicle; additionally, the Blind Fire modifier may apply to the attacker as the situation dictates). Passengers attempting to defend against an attack inside a vehicle suffer a -2 dice pool modifier to their Defense Test, since their movements are limited to the interior of the vehicle. Additionally, the passengers gain protection from the vehicle's chassis, adding the Armor of the vehicle to any personal armor the characters are wearing.

In the case of ramming, suppressive fire, shot-firing shotguns, and area-effect attacks, both passengers and vehicles resist the damage equally.

HEALING

So you've been shot, stabbed, burned, electrocuted, slashed, and blown up and you want to know what your options are for getting back out on the street to start earning those nuyen again. This is where you'll find them.

FIRST AID

Characters with the First Aid skill may immediately help reduce the trauma of wounds (Stun or Physical). First Aid can only be used if you have a medkit (even if you do not currently have supplies for it), and it may only be applied within 1 hour of when the damage was taken. Roll a First Aid + Logic [Mental] (2) Test, applying appropriate modifiers from the Healing Modifiers table. (Characters using First Aid on themselves or others must also apply their wound modifiers to the test.) Each net hit over the threshold removes 1 box of damage; divide the net effect in half (rounded up) if the victim being treated is wearing any kind of full-body armor in

order to represent the difficulty of treating the patient through armor.

A critical glitch on a First Aid Test increases the damage by 1D3 (1D6 ÷ 2) boxes. The maximum damage healable with the First Aid skill is equal to the skill's rating. First Aid may only be applied to a character once for that set of wounds, and it may not be applied if the character has been magically healed.

Using the First Aid skill in combat requires a Complex Action and takes a number of Combat Turns equal to the number of boxes of damage the character is healing. This means the character applying First Aid must spend one Complex Action per Combat Turn providing care but may spend the rest of their Action Phases however they would like.

First Aid may also be used to simply diagnose a character's health, the extent of wounds taken, or the effect of other ailments. The gamemaster sets the threshold as appropriate to the character's health or affliction, and awards information appropriate to the net hits scored.

CONVENTIONAL AND MAGICAL HEALING: HOW THEY WORK TOGETHER

Magical healing, first aid, medicine, and all other forms of wound treatment work in very different ways and often do not work well together.

First Aid and the Heal spell directly heal injuries in the form of recovered damage boxes and can only be applied once to any single set of injuries. Also, First Aid cannot be applied once the Heal spell has been used, though Heal can be used after First Aid.

Medicine does not heal injuries but instead provides bonuses on Recovery Tests.

In terms of maximizing efforts a magically skilled DocWagon team will apply their efforts according to their Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). First Aid and then a Heal spell in the field, followed by a Medicine-skilled doctor working at an extended care facility. This regimen has proven highly effective in helping even the most grievously injured clients recover with remarkable alacrity.

NATURAL RECOVERY

Stun and Physical damage both heal naturally, though at different rates. Medical attention can help hasten the process. In both cases, healing is handled as an Extended Test. Hits from each test should be recorded separately in case an interruption occurs at some point in the healing process so the character and gamemaster

EXAMPLE

Sir Rigs-a-Lot stopped at the Stuffer Shack to pick up some SoyCrunch when a couple of 405 Hellhounds looking for some easy targets caught him outside the safety of his rigger cocoon. The gangers put some serious hurt on Sir Rigs-a-Lot before he could get back into his van and activate its automatic defenses.

Fortunately for him, the ruckus woke Full Deck, who'd been taking a nap in the back of the van. The automatic defenses won't keep the 405 Hellhounds at bay forever, but they will give the decker time to test out his Combat Wounds specialization. He's real interested in finding out whether he can get Sir Rigs-a-Lot back in action to take care of the gangers before they start lobbing explosives at the van.

Full Deck pulls out the top of the line DocWagon Aesculapius wireless-enabled medkit and spends a Complex Action connecting it to his injured teammate. Once the medkit is in place Full Deck uses another Complex Action to roll his First Aid skill 1 + Combat Wounds specialization 2 + Logic 5 + medkit rating 6 – poor conditions 2, which means he has 12 dice limited by his Mental limit of 5 plus the medkit rating of 6, totaling 11. On 12 dice he rolls 6, 6, 6, 5, 5, 5, 4, 4, 3, 2, 1, 1 for 6 hits! Thanks to his fantastic medkit, he's under his limit and can use all 6 hits. He compares those 6 hits to the threshold of the test (2), giving him 4 net hits to heal damage. Healing those 4 boxes requires 4 Combat Turns. Hopefully, the gangers give them a break for 12 seconds or so.

know how much damage would have been healed up to that point.

Natural Recovery can be bolstered by the use of medkits or autodoc drones.

STUN DAMAGE

Make a Body + Willpower (1 hour) Extended Test. The character must rest for the entire hour for it to count (forced naps and unconsciousness also count). Each hit heals 1 box of Stun damage.

PHYSICAL DAMAGE

Make a Body x 2 (1 day) Extended Test. The character must rest for the entire day for it to count (forced naps and unconsciousness also count). Each hit heals 1 box of Physical damage. Physical damage cannot be healed through rest if the character also has Stun damage; the Stun damage must be healed first.

GLITCHES & HEALING

A glitch on a healing test (Stun or Physical) doubles the resting time (the damage is still healed—it just takes longer). A critical glitch increases the damage by 1D3 (1D6 ÷ 2) boxes in addition to doubling the resting time.

MEDICINE

Characters with the Medicine skill are able to speed the healing process. The character makes a Medicine + Logic [Mental] Test; apply appropriate modifiers, including wound modifiers if a character is applying the Medicine skill to her own wounds. Each hit provides +1 die to any subsequent healing tests the character

EXAMPLE

Full Deck had one hell of a night. Between the IC at the Mitsuhama node his team needed him to hack and the feral AI that decided to jump him on his way home he got pretty beat up. Full Deck took 7 boxes of Stun and 4 boxes of Physical damage during the course of the night. He works remotely, already burned through all the supplies in his medkit, and doesn't have anyone around to help him recover.

Full Deck has to heal the Stun first so he lays down and takes a nice six-hour nap. He rolls Body 2 + Willpower 4 and gets 6, 5, 4, 3, 3, 2 for 2 hits. That's 2 boxes of Stun damage healed in the first hour. He keeps making the same roll each hour, subtracting a die each time, and gets 2, 1, 1, and 2 hits over the next four hours. All of his Stun damage is healed up about half an hour into his fifth hour of sleep.

Now that all the Stun is healed, Full Deck can start rolling to heal his Physical injuries. He decides to keep resting at home, lounging around on the couch and ordering takeout. Full Deck rolls (Body 2) x 2 once per day. Over the next four days, his hits are as follows: 1, 0 (glitch), 2, and 0 (critical glitch) hits. The glitch means that one day's worth of healing actually took two days, so at this point Full Deck has healed 3 boxes of Physical damage in 6 days. The gamemaster has Full Deck stop rolling so he can determine how badly Full Deck injured himself with that critical glitch. The gamemaster rolls 1D3 and gets 2, adding 2 more boxes of Physical damage and putting Full Deck back up to 3 boxes of Physical damage. Continuing to heal, Full Deck rolls his 4 dice and gets 0, 1 (glitch), 0, 1, 0, 0, and 1 (glitch) hits. With each glitch counting as 2 days, this adds 9 more days to Full Deck's recuperation. But eventually his body heals, and 15 days after his hell of a night, he's fully recovered and back on the street.

HEALING MODIFIERS TABLE

SITUATION	MODIFIER
Good conditions (sterilized med facility)	+0
Average conditions (indoors)	–1
Poor conditions (street or wilderness)	–2
Bad conditions (combat, bad weather, swamp)	–3
Terrible conditions (fire, severe storm)	–4
No medical supplies	–3
Improvised medical supplies	–1
Wireless medkit/autodoc	+Rating
Applying medical care remotely through medkit/autodoc	–2
Assistance	As Teamwork Test (p. 49)
Uncooperative patient	–2
Patient is Awakened or Emerged	–2
Patient has implants	–1 per 2 full points of lost Essence

EXAMPLE

Wombat is injured yet again and Doctor Love is taking some extra time to keep an eye on his injured goon. Doctor Love gets Wombat set up in a nice comfortable bed at Motel 666 in Redmond. It's not the nicest spot (–2 for conditions), but Doctor Love has Wombat connected to a DocWagon HolePatcher4000 wireless-enabled medkit, and he also has all of his tools with him.

Doctor Love rolls Medicine 4 + Logic 4 + medkit rating 4 – Conditions 2 for 10 dice, and the medkit rating of 4 added to his Mental limit of 6 makes the limit for this test 10. On his roll, he gets 6, 6, 5, 5, 5, 5, 4, 3, 2,1—6 hits.

For each day that Wombat is healing and Doctor Love can give him 30 minutes of attention, Wombat gets a +6 to his Body x 2 roll to heal naturally. If Doctor Love is not able to put in the 30 minutes on a day, Wombat doesn't get the bonus that day.

If Doctor Love set the medkit to work without him, the gamemaster could roll for just the medkit and see if it provides any bonus while the doctor is gone but it would only have a 6 die pool ((medkit rating 4) x 2 – Conditions 2), and a glitch would be bad news for the recovering Wombat.

makes for healing through rest as long as the character using the Medicine skill spends some time tending to the injured character. For Physical injuries the character needs to spend at least 30 minutes per day tending to the injuries of her patient. For Stun it is 10 minutes per hour to gain the bonus dice.

Medicine may only be applied once to each set of wounds, but it may be applied even if First Aid and/or magical healing have already been used. Additional damage taken afterward counts as a new set of wounds. Medicine may be used to diagnose a character's health in the same manner as First Aid.

Medicine cannot be applied in combat situations.

MEDKITS AND AUTODOCS

The capabilities of modern **medkits** (p. 450) and **autodoc drones** rival those of trained paramedics. They can serve as a valuable aid to a medtech's diagnoses or applied healing, or they can simply be hooked up to the patient and set to apply medical care automatically.

To use a medkit/autodoc in combat is a time-consuming task. First the character must perform a Complex Action to apply a medkit/autodoc. After the medkit/autodoc is in place she receives a dice pool modifier equal to the medkit rating (if it's functioning wirelessly) or the autodoc's First Aid or Medicine autosoft when treating a character. If the character is untrained, she can still make an untrained First Aid test using her Logic attribute minus 1 die and the device's rating in place of her First Aid skill. If a wireless medkit is hooked up to a patient and left unattended, simply roll the device's rating x 2 for any subsequent tests.

Medkits and autodocs can be accessed and controlled remotely via the Matrix/wireless link.

MAGICAL HEALING

The Heal spell can be used to repair physical injuries. Each hit from the Spellcasting Test heals one box of Physical damage (up to a maximum equal to the spell's Force; see **Healing**, p. 205). Sorcery cannot heal damage resulting from magical Drain.

PHYSICAL DAMAGE OVERFLOW

Characters who exceed their Physical Condition Monitor and enter into overflow damage (see **Exceeding the Condition Monitor**, p. 170) are at risk of dying if they do not receive prompt medical attention. If you go over (Body) points of overflow damage, that's it, you're dead—time to permanently check out and go meet Mr. Johnson in the Big Shadowrunner Bar in the Sky.

STABILIZATION

If the character's condition is not stabilized, she takes an additional box of damage every (Body) minutes for blood loss, shock, and other things that affect a body on the brink of death. In order to stabilize a wounded character, a First Aid + Logic [Mental] (3) Test or Medicine + Logic [Mental] (3) Test must be made (situational modifiers apply). Medkits and autodocs may be used to stabilize a character as well. If successful, the wounded patient stabilizes and no longer takes automatic additional damage. If the stabilization fails, the character continues to take damage until she dies. Additional stabilization tests may be made, at a cumulative -2 dice pool modifier per test.

The **Stabilize** spell (p. 289) may also be used to stabilize a character, but the **Heal** spell (p. 288) cannot. Once a character has been stabilized, First Aid, Medicine and/or magical healing may be applied normally.

EXAMPLE

Wombat has just lost an argument with the wrong end of a Panther assault cannon and is not doing very well. The cannon hit him with 14 boxes of damage, filling up 11 boxes of his Physical Condition Monitor and throwing 3 into damage overflow. Wombat has a Body of 4, giving him a total of 4 boxes of damage overflow and meaning he will take an additional automatic box of damage every 4 minutes.

The firefight is pretty hectic, and time passes without any aid for Wombat—the clock on his remaining life is ticking! After 7 Combat Turns, Doctor Love is finally able to get to Wombat and start working on stabilization.

Doctor Love has a First Aid skill 4 and his Logic is also 4. During the battle Doctor Love took 4 boxes of Stun damage from a gel round, giving him a –1 wound modifier. The gamemaster determines the conditions of the medical theater (a street in the Barrens) to be bad (–3), imposing another penalty on Doctor Love's dice pool.

Doctor Love rolls his 4 dice (4 + 4 – 1 – 3 = 4) and gets 6, 4, 3, 1, making 1 hit. That's less than the threshold of 3 he needed to successfully stabilize Wombat.

Realizing the difficulty of the situation, Doctor Love decides he might need some extra help. He uses his next Action Phase to Ready Item and pulls out his trusty DocWagon HolePatcher4000 medkit (Rating 4).

Doctor Love hooks up Wombat to the medkit using a Use Complex Item action on his first Action Phase and then attempts stabilization again on his second. This time his dice pool is 6—4 from skill, 4 from Logic, and 4 from the medkit, losing 1 for his wound, 3 for conditions, and 2 since this is the second stabilization attempt. He rolls 6, 5, 5, 1, 1, 1—3 hits, but also a glitch. Wombat is stabilized but the gamemaster determines that the wounds are very precarious, so Doctor Love is going to need to pay extra attention to his patient for the rest of the combat by spending a Complex Action each Combat Turn and not moving so he can take care of his patient.

ROOFTOPS AND RAINBOWS

I shivered as I sat on the roof of the Mulvihill Center, thirty stories above the streets of Seattle. The wind was cold and damp, and it cut right through me. For the hundredth time in the last half-hour, I wished I'd worn something heavier. Something with sleeves, maybe.

I was too much a slave to my own vanity. My vest was armored and would stop a heavy pistol round, but I loved showing off my arms and legs. I was proud of my tattoos, given to me by my tribe. Even though no one outside the tribe knew their significance, they meant the world to me. The Cedar River Tribe had taken me in when I was a child and had been left orphaned on the street. They didn't know who killed my parents, and I never found out. All they knew was that a terrified and crying four-year-old dwarf girl was sitting in an alley near their territory, and they adopted me.

The Urban Tribes aren't like the regular Amerind Tribes. They're like a street gang in some ways, but they're also so much more than that. They come from all walks of life, from all different tribal backgrounds. A few have no Amerind blood in them at all, like me. They don't hold to all of the older Amerind traditions and superstitions but have forged their own beliefs, rituals, and traditions. It's a mix of ancient tribal lore and beliefs that embrace the urban environs of the Seattle sprawl, putting old ways into a new way of life.

I wear my tats proudly. My right arm proclaims me a warrior of the Cedar River Tribe. My left shoulder marks me as a technoshaman for the tribe, a decker. I'd shown a natural aptitude for computers at a young age, so when I turned fifteen the tribe bought me a datajack and a commlink, and I upgraded to one of the new cyberdecks earlier this year when I started shadowrunning full time. Usually it was a lot of fun. Tonight, not so much.

I was bored, cold, wet, and tired. My mind was wandering, so I forced myself to look down and pay attention. I was perched up here on overwatch, and I hated it. I was restless. I'd rather be stuck in there, doing something, fighting, decking, whatever. My only consolation was that for the time being, the rest of my team was doing the same thing.

I looked down at my wrist and with a mental command, my ICBreaker game shimmered into view. I reached up and gave a little flick, and a small golden orb fired up into a group of white, grey, and black IC icons. Several shattered, and my attack orb reformed at the bottom of the augmented reality image. A second flick sent it careening up, busting several more IC orbs. A small alarm sounded in my ear, and the background flickered from green to orange, indicating a heightened alert status. I'd broken the wrong IC program. Soon the IC would go on the offensive, moving to attack, and once that

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happens losing is a forgone conclusion. In that respect the game echoed real life. Getting in and out of places isn't about setting off alarms and then beating them down; it's about not being seen in the first place. Once security, any security, knows you're there, you can't stand and fight and expect to survive for long.

I sighed and flipped the game off. I wasn't in the mood for ICBreaker anymore. I thought about my other AR games but dismissed them as well. There wasn't anyone else around for Miracle Shooter, and while the game would generate a solo dungeon for me in Dawn of Atlantis III, it was a very flashy game and anyone viewing AR would see me up here. Both would alert any nearby players to my location as well.

"Spirits," I muttered to myself. "I hate these jobs."

A voice sliced over the comm. "Can the chatter, Badger Three."

Drek! I must be tired! "Sorry about that bossman. Forgot my mic was on."

"Null sheen." Badger Leader replied. "It's about time for a check-in anyway. Sound off, people. Everyone still in position?"

"Badger One, check." That was Evan, the team's muscle. He was set up at the local Soybucks in the lobby of the building across the street. Fortunately we were close enough to the Ork Underground that the manager wasn't likely to be one that would find some reason why Evan couldn't chill out and sip an overpriced soychino. A lot of places wouldn't be so forgiving.

"Badger Two, five by five." Even with something as routine as checking in, Megan managed to sound haughty and all better-than-thou. The only thing worse than an elf with runway-model good looks was a runway model with religion backing her up. Still, she was a hell of a good rigger and our getaway driver should things turn sour.

"Badger Three pondering buying some novacoke from this dude across the way, picking up a couple of these hookers, committing suicide, or all three at once. Roger-Roger, over and out." I stifled a laugh. Christopher Laughing Coyote was our shaman—Coyote of course. He refused to take anything seriously, much to my delight and Badger Leader's annoyance. I was looking forward to crawling into a warm bath with Chris when this was over.

"Badger Four here," I replied.

"Ok people, stay sharp. We're still on the clock, so no goofing off."

I sighed again, making certain my mic was off this time. Mac was a good guy, a great leader, and he'd survived the biz for nearly two decades so he had the experience. But someone strung his wires way too tightly when they were first installed, 'cause Mac was incredibly intense and had no sense of humor.

This wasn't our usual type of job. We were babysitting. Mr. Johnson apparently had some good intel that some runners were going to hit an office on the fifteenth floor tonight, and our job was to stop them. If no one showed up by morning, we were in the clear and would get paid for nothing more than a night sitting in the rain. We'd probably get the flu as well if the weather didn't let up a little. We'd been up here for six hours already, and in two more we could clock out and collect our fee. Easy peasy, but boring.

I settled back again and triggered the zoom on my cybereyes, scoping out the building across the street. A few hours earlier I was able to watch a couple making out in an office on the twenty-third floor. Nothing spectacular, and they left before getting to any good stuff, but it was a welcome distraction. I started scanning the floors one by one to see if anything else would come up.

"Badger Three here. I have movement." I jerked my head up as Chris' voice came through the comm. My eyelids felt stiff. Dammit. I must have dozed off, though I couldn't be sure just when I lost it. I shook my head and rolled my neck to loosen it, wincing as the stiffened muscles popped from the movement. It had been nearly an hour since our last check-in, and at least ten minutes since I'd last noticed the time.

"Stay frosty, Three. Report." Badger Leader's voice was cool and calm.

"I see two ... no, three targets coming downstairs," Chris reported. "Damn, when did they get upstairs? They have a small case with them. I'm going to move in a little closer."

"Stay put, Three. One will pick them up in a second," Mac said.

"I got this. If I can just get—" His voice was cut off by a burst of gunfire. For an agonizing second I could hear the roar of weaponry, a scream, then a burst of static as Christopher Laughing Coyote's comm went dead. A cold feeling gripped my stomach.

"Dammit. One, move up and I'll meet you. Two, be ready to move and get your fly into place. Four, find their signals, see if you can mark them," Mac said quietly, a hint of steel in is voice. "We need to reach Three and pull him out if we can, and we need to stop these guys. They took one of ours down. We pay back tenfold, people."

I closed my eyes and tried to focus. Chris was fun, but there wasn't anything serious between us. There couldn't be, we worked together. We both knew the risks, we both knew this could happen. It was just fun, just something to keep us occupied. Just a meaningless fling.

So why did I have a spike of fear and pain running through my gut right now?

I clenched my jaw tight enough that my teeth started to hurt. I took a deep breath and reached out through my cyberdeck. The SIN I was currently using, purchased less than a month ago, came with access to Seattle's Emerald Grid. I opened my virtual eyes and looked around me. I was atop the gleaming host icon of the Mulvihill Center, the structure looking much like it did in real life except it was made of bright steel. The city wasn't much changed, though it was washed in a steady green glow rather than the multi-colored neon that normally shone down. I could see hundreds of other icons moving about in the distance. Below me the Mulvihill's host pulsed, and I could sense dozens of other hosts underneath. Adverts, spamverts, and blipverts bombarded my senses. Millions of files, messages, and mail flashed by as they flew down the electron highways to their intended destination.

It took me a second to filter out the noise and process the data-chaos cascading around me, and in that moment I was in heaven. There's a moment everyone experiences on occasion, a drastic, immeasurable feeling that signifies change, and chaos, and loss of control. In that moment you feel euphoric and terrified. That brief second when you lean too far back on a chair and it starts to tip, but you catch yourself. The moment when the hot shower water turns to piercing icy cold because someone flushed a toilet. Feeling your tires slide on an icy road before they catch themselves. Fear grabs you deeply, lancing through you because that sudden change or and loss of control terrifies you. But it also makes you feel more alive than anything else, and the moment when you recover, when you adapt, when you adjust, you get this rush of power, this feeling that anything is possible.

I reveled in the wash of emotions and sounds and feelings that rushed over and through me as my mind connected to the Matrix and I shivered with pleasure. I tell people that jacking into the Matrix is better than sex, and they all laugh. All but my fellow electron cowboys.

I had an urban jungle theme going, and so all the background noise in the area appeared like swarms of buzzing flies. I swatted them away, trying to get a good look around and find the enemy team somewhere in the thick green foliage. I focused on the Badgers' transmissions, sending out a vine tendril straight to his location. Scanning would be easier if I was closer to the search area—from this distance, my filter program was running overtime to compensate. My heart jumped when another one of my vines started moving out, making a very faint connection to Chris' signal, weak and intermittent. His 'link was damaged but still connected, and that gave me a faint hope that he was still alive. I grimaced and pushed that aside for now, I had work to do.

A few more flies had gathered, so I gave them a blast of some virtual mist then watched them drop like, well, flies. I saw a lot of icons moving through the brush, and I ignored the ones I could see easily. I knew the people I wanted to see would be running silent and not in plain sight. I used a virtual machete to cut my way through the brush, and after a few thwacks I finally saw something. I grinned and focused on the signal, cracking through it

after a moment. Their hardware was good enough that they could waltz through the Mulvihill's security, but not good enough to stop me.

They were operating off an Ares grid, which made things a little more difficult. The grid wasn't easy to pop onto—the virtual representation was a very rickety rope bridge leading into forbidding mist—but security was tighter there, and I'd be at a disadvantage in this fight unless I hopped grids. Now that I'd found them, I wouldn't lose them, so I backed off and decided to switch to the Ares grid. Emerald green wasn't my color anyway. I focused for a second, then reached out and grabbed the bridge. I stepped forward and hoped it would hold.

The landscape instantly changed. My jungle theme disappeared, overwhelmed by Ares' own red-and-black sculpting. I looked around, waiting a moment to see if I was going to need to dodge Ares security or worse, GODs. When nothing happened, I sent my virtual self down again to check on the enemy team and found them again. There were three members, their personas shadowy versions of off-the-shelf paper doll icons. They weren't regular Matrix users, which meant their decker was elsewhere. The team was using the decker to firewall their gear, and that meant ...

Hah! I laughed silently as I found a shadowy cord tethering the team's personas back to their decker. I could follow this and take him down, removing their Matrix protection. That would let the rest of the Badgers take out these guys, and we could call it a night and get Chris some medical care ASAP. I buzzed up, following the cord around to the far side of the Mulvihill's host icon. Then I stopped dead in my tracks.

The decker had on a suit of powered armor and carried a gun nearly as big as he was. I instantly dismissed him. Wearing a SpaceMarine3000 persona icon marked him as a rookie. Ares sold those for fifty nuyen. Anyone who wore one of those was either too new to know what he was doing, or not skilled enough to craft his own persona.

No, what stopped me was the icon the decker was sitting on. Next to him was a sleek figure wearing reflective, black, form-fitting armor with a pilot's helmet, and they were riding a large dragon! I blinked, then swore. It wasn't a dragon, but something almost as nasty for my team sitting down below. A quick scan of the icon showed it was in reality a Nissan Hound, a military-grade transport chopper. I was risking discovery as well as the wrath of GOD, but I had to know more. I did a more in-depth scan of the chopper, trusting that the decker's drektastic persona icon wasn't a bluff and that he really was the newbie he appeared to be.

"Frag. Guys, Badger Four here. We got trouble," I called over the comm.

"What do you see, Misty?" Megan said, forgetting to use our mission call sign. Mac was going to fry a neuron over that.

"You guys got a chopper incoming to extract the bad guys. Heavy armed, heavily armored. We got null firepower to deal with this thing."

"Can you take it down, Badger Four?" Mac put a slight emphasis on my call sign, enough to let everyone know he was pissed at Megan's breach of protocol.

"Depends on the flyboy. The decker looks to be a newb, so he shouldn't be much trouble. But any rigger that has something like this Hound isn't going to be a pushover," I said, carefully watching the chopper's icon. "I'm marking it and the three on the ground for you on your HUD."

"Thanks, Badger Four. Good luck."

I watched the Hound for a moment longer, then sprang into action. I was better in combat than I was being sneaky, so I decided to just go for the brute-force approach. I flew upwards to get a little closer to the Hound's icon, then lifted my bow and drew, releasing a jet-black arrow with a spinning buzzsaw blade on the front. It flew swift and true, burying itself in the decker's chest. I grinned as he slumped, then drew and released again, taking advantage of the surprise I had. The arrow was intended for the rigger, but at the last moment the dragon lifted its neck and the arrow imbedded into the metallic black scales with a flash of sparks.

The dragon spun and took off toward the rest of his team. The rigger wasn't equipped to fight me with the decker down, but I could see the armor plates on the dragon thicken as he took measures to defend himself from me. If he could get his people and get airborne, he could dodge me until GOD caught up with me. Not an outcome that was good for my health. I pulled a paintbrush out of a pouch at my belt and waved it in the air next to me as I chased the dragon down. A counter started up, showing me about how long I had till the Grid Overwatch Douchebags caught up to me. I had time still, but not nearly enough.

I fired a couple more arrows at the dragon, twice more catching it in the neck. I wasn't doing a ton of damage, but each shot left one of my arrows embedded in it. I grinned and opened my meat eyes, looking at the helicopter flying past my perch on the Mulvihill. I had it now.

With a flick of the wrist, I called up a virtual image of the Nissan Hound's control deck with a small virtual representation of the Hound above it. One button press locked the controls and the eject button, rendering the rigger impotent. I grinned, imagining his fear and frustration. A second virtual button gave me control over the rotors. I smiled, reached up and touched the nose of the Hound.

"This is for Chris, you bastard." I muttered as I pulled the nose of the chopper down, aiming it for the ground twenty stories below.

THE MATRIX

We use it every day to read our email, pay our bills, talk to our friends and loved ones. It monitors our money, handles our utilities, and manages the traffic on our streets. Billions of people use it constantly, from the hungry family in Redmond to the CEO in Neo-Tokyo and everyone in between. It is the Matrix, the digital world within a world made of fiber-optic cables, networks, and more data and computing power than has ever existed in the history of the planet. A record that exists today so it can be broken tomorrow.

Everybody uses the Matrix. Most shadowrunners have multiple pieces of gear that use it, often interacting with the Matrix without them knowing it. Smartlinks use it to look up local conditions and calculate firing solutions, medkits access medical databases to analyze and diagnose injuries and then recommend treatment, and your clothes and armor use it to detect wear and tear. And tell you when it's time to do the laundry.

Some shadowrunners do more than just soak in information the gear gathers for them. They use the Matrix as a tool and a weapon. They glide through it, bending it to their will, making it dance and spin to the tune they call. Such a runner is called a **hacker.** There are two kinds of hackers, classified based on how they interact with the Matrix: **deckers**, who use cyberdecks to access the bones and muscle of the Matrix and twist that structure to their will; and **technomancers**, who have a downright weird ability to interface and control the digital world without the aid of technology.

Hackers play critical roles on shadowrunning teams. They open locked doors, muffle alarms, cancel security calls, unearth buried facts, monitor things other team members can't see, and keep the heat off long enough for the rest of the team to finish the run. In a scrap, they can take control of or destroy opponents' weapons and gear.

They also play an important role in defense. Every other skilled team in the world has a hacker running interference for them; if your team doesn't, you're vulnerable to whatever electronic havoc they decide to bring down on your head. Quick tip: leaving yourself vulnerable is a bad idea.

WIRELESS WORLD

The paradox of the Matrix is this: to be an ace hacker, you need to understand it—but no one really understands it. Like so many things, though, the real key is to know more and be better than the next guy. So let's get you started with a quick overview of the Matrix experience. We won't start with hacking, because you need to walk before you can run. We'll start with the ways users—you and everyone else—experience the Matrix.

When you jack in and flip over to the electronic world, you plunge into a virtual environment of a consensual hallucination. Everything is rendered in incredible detail powered by a century of digital graphics innovation. Sometimes it seems almost real, but either through conscious artificiality or the difficulty of duplicating the complexities of the physical world, the computer-generated seams usually show.

Physical laws don't apply in the Matrix (unless some jackwad admin programmed them into a host, but those strictures can always be overwritten if you know what you're doing). You want to fly? Go ahead and fly. And watch the vast expanse of exquisite artificiality spread out around you.

Below you, stretching off in every direction, three-dimensional icons of real-world devices light up the landscape like a galaxy of stars in a perfect night sky. The devices that appear to be closest to you are the ones nearest your meat body. Your own icon—your virtual self— is usually the brightest and clearest of the icons. The points of light on the distant horizon, the devices that are the farthest from your presence in the real world, flicker and sputter with the lag of data traveling from the other side of the globe.

Hovering above you, massive hosts—tremendous data collections guarded by spiders and IC—float like corporate gods, attempting to see everything and be surprised by nothing. Their custom geometries form a virtual geography that is unconnected to the meat-bound map below. The larger ones, the size of cities, belong to the Big Ten megacorporations and are dangerous to enter if you're not invited. Other, smaller hosts cluster in the neural sky, offering social connections, presenting consumer products, or promising darker pleasures.

MATRIX JARGON

If you're going to spend any serious time in the Matrix, you have to be able to sling around the lingo. Hackers move fast and talk faster—this is the stuff you need to know so they don't leave you behind.

agent: A semi-autonomous program that is capable of taking independent action in the Matrix.

archive: An area of a host that stores files securely away from all users, legitimate or otherwise.

artificial intelligence (AI): Self–aware and self–sustaining intelligent programs that evolved within the Matrix.

augmented reality (AR): Information added to or overlaid upon a user's normal sensory perceptions in the form of visual data, graphics, sounds, haptics, smell, and/or limited simsense.

augmented reality object (ARO): Virtual representations (usually visual graphics, but other sensory data can be included, typically sound) that are connected to a physical object or location in the physical world and viewable through augmented reality. The abbreviation, ARO, is pronounced "arrow."

avatar: The icon of a persona.

better–than–life (BTL, beetle): Hyper–real levels of simsense that are addictive and potentially dangerous.

brick: To destroy a device by Matrix damage; also, a device destroyed in that fashion.

cold-sim: Standard simsense that operates at legal, safe levels. Used by most people to access virtual reality.

commcode: Combination email address, phone number, and IM name that identifies an individual for communications; if people want to get a hold of you, this is what they need.

commlink ('link): The handheld or worn personal computer used by nearly everyone to access wireless services.

complex form: Mental algorithms that technomancers use to manipulate the Matrix—their equivalent of programs.

control rig: An implanted augmentation that allows a rigger to "jump" into a vehicle, drone, or other device, giving him or her superior control and performance.

deck: A tablet-sized computer used to hack the Matrix; it is restricted or illegal in most of the civilized world.

demiGOD: A subsection of the Grid Overwatch Division that oversees a single grid, run by the grid's owner.

device: A piece of gear that performs functions integral to a network.

direct neural interface (DNI): A connection between the brain's neural impulses and a computer system that allows a user to mentally interact with that system.

drone: An unmanned vehicle that can be controlled via direct wireless link or through the Matrix.

echo: An enhanced ability a technomancer can learn after undergoing submersion.

fading: Mental drain technomancers sometimes experience when using their abilities.

file: A program or set of data that is collected as a single package; this runs the gamut from annual reports and kitten videos to autosofts and Attack programs.

firewall: A program that guards a node from intrusion. This is the first line of defense of a device or host to fend off unwanted Matrix interference.

geo-tagging: Assigning AROs to a specific physical location, often using RFID tags.

ghost in the machine: Mysterious phenomena and perceived entities that exist entirely within the Matrix. Some believe these are AIs or magical spirits of the Matrix. Others believe they are the disembodied personalities of people trapped within the Matrix during and since the Crash of '64.

GOD: Grid Overwatch Division, an entity run by the Corporate Court to oversee security in the Matrix.

grid: The resources offered by a Matrix provider; typically, you can access information on that provider's grid easily, while accessing info on other grids is more difficult. The term is also used to refer to the Matrix as a whole outside any host.

MATRIX JARGON, CONT.

hacker: Someone who explores and exploits the Matrix.

haptics: Computer interactions based on the sense of touch.

host: A self-contained place in the Matrix. Hosts have no physical location, as they exist purely in the Matrix cloud.

hot-sim: Simsense without the safeguards that prevent potentially damaging biofeedback. Hot-sim is illegal in the civilized world.

icon: The virtual representation of a device, persona, file, or host in the Matrix.

intrusion countermeasures (IC): Software that runs in a host and protects that host from unauthorized users. The abbreviation, IC, is pronounced "ice."

jackpoint: Any physical location that provides access to the Matrix through plugging in with a wired connection.

living persona: The mental "organic software" that allows technomancers to access the Matrix with only their minds.

master: A device, usually a commlink, cyberdeck, or host, that is linked to other devices in order to protect them against Matrix attacks.

Matrix authentication recognition key (mark): A token that measures a user's access to a device, host, or persona.

Matrix object: A persona, file, device, mark, or host in the Matrix.

Matrix: The worldwide telecommunications network and everyone and everything connected to and by that network.

meat: (slang) An unwired individual, or the physical part of a Matrix user in VR.

meshed: (slang) Online, connected to the Matrix.

noise: Unwanted data or wireless signals that make using the Matrix slower or more difficult. (slang) Unwelcome information.

persona: A user, agent, or other autonomous or semi-autonomous icon in the Matrix.

personal area network (PAN): The set of devices slaved to a single commlink or cyberdeck.

pilot: A sophisticated program with semi-autonomous decision-making abilities.

radio frequency identification tag (RFID, pronounced "arfid"): A device no bigger than a matchbox that holds data and other miniaturized electronics.

real life (RL): (slang) Anything not having to do with the Matrix.

Resonance: The measure of a technomancer's ability to access and manipulate the Matrix.

Resonance Realms: A mysterious plane of virtual existence that technomancers can access. It is believed that a copy of every bit of electronic data ever created exists somewhere in the Resonance Realms.

rigger: Someone who uses a control rig to "jump" into a properly adapted device (usually a drone, vehicle, or security system) in order to directly control it as if the device were an extension of his or her own body.

sculpting: The look and feel of a host's internal virtual space.

simrig: A device for making simsense recordings.

simsense (sim, simstim): Hardware and software that enable a person to experience what has happened to someone else as if they had sensed and experienced the events themselves. Requires a direct neural interface.

slave: A device connected to a master device, usually a commlink, cyberdeck, or host, on which the slave depends for defense against Matrix attacks.

spam zone: An area flooded with invasive and/or viral AR advertising, causing noise.

spider: A security hacker/rigger employed by a corporation or law-enforcement agency to protect a physical space or a host from hackers.

sprite: A Resonance-based entity created (or called) by a technomancer.

static zone: An area where the physical environment creates noise.

submersion: A state in which a technomancer strengthens his or her connection to the Resonance.

tag: An RFID tag.

technomancer: A person who is able to use and manipulate the Matrix without hardware. The term often carries connotations of hacking and cyber-terrorism.

trodes: A headband or net worn on the head that creates a direct neural interface. Popular models include an attached hat, wig, or other headware. Short for "dry active electrode array."

virtual reality (VR): A state where outside stimuli are ignored and the user only receives impressions from the Matrix. Requires a direct neural interface.

wide area network: A set of devices slaved to a host.

Between it all are the representations of people, processes, programs, and data that zip from icon to icon and host to host, leaving datatrails of light that fade back into the dim hum of information. The Matrix moves at the speed of light and thought.

That's the view from virtual reality. There are other ways to view the Matrix, but VR is the only way to see it firsthand. And it's the only way that lets you fly.

MATRIX BASICS

Everything in the Matrix is an **icon,** a virtual representation that allows you to interact with something in the Matrix. Every object's owner can choose what the icon looks like, within certain limits. An icon doesn't just represent a Matrix object in an abstract way; it shows you what it is and how to access it. The Matrix is programmed to give users a context to make it easier to work and play; if a tool is hard to use, it's not much of a tool. There are designers and programmers who deliberately obfuscate an icon's purpose with confusing design, but for the most part people like to know how they can use whatever they encounter. Most Matrix locations require icons to match certain visual protocols.

For example, let's say you're in the host for Dante's Inferno. The Inferno is a popular and swanky nightclub with a presence in the real world (it's on Fifth and Madison in Seattle's Downtown), but it's also got a host that looks the same as the physical club so that patrons from around the world can fly in for a visit at a moment's notice. So you get to the club's host, pay your cover charge with a quick transfer of nuyen from your account to the Inferno, and in a blink you're whisked to your favorite spot in the club. In this case, let's say you go to the fifth level to enjoy the iconography of angry, dead souls writhing to the beat in and under swampy water. You're in the mood for virtual food, so you call up a menu. That's a file, and Dante's menu appears as a flaming scroll with a fancy script. The programmers and the Inferno know it's something you'd want to read—and they want you to read it—so they make sure the icon looks like something you'd read, in this case a scroll. The flames feel hot and look bright, but they're just virtual. If you were somewhere else, like say the Club Penumbra host, a nightclub with an outer space theme, it wouldn't look like a flaming scroll, but it would still look like something you'd read (in this case, an astronaut's log book).

The whole Matrix is like that. Everything is custom crafted by its owners and is generally designed for intuitive usefulness. The other side of the experience is your software. Some hackers don't want other programmers telling them how their icons look. So they run software to impose their own visuals on their icons. The struggle to show what you want to show is only one of the battles you'll fight in the Matrix. Most people, though, don't bother to fight over iconography, and just let the designers of the Matrix win out.

Matrix protocols limit the relative sizes of everything to give users a standard experience they can share. If your icon was a robot version of the Wuxing Skytower, that might seem cool, but if you're talking to someone with an icon of a dung beetle or something, then communication's not going to run smooth. To overcome this, personas (people in the Matrix) are kept between dwarf and troll sizes, so what you actually would end up with in the described conversation is a comically small skyscraper talking to a frightfully large bug, so you're both approximately the same size. Files and devices are smaller than personas (so you'll never see someone reading a book the size of a great dragon for example), and hosts are larger (much larger in the case of big sites, like the megas' corporate hosts).

VIRTUAL VISIONS

That sets up the size of things, but what do they look like? The answer is a bit more complicated than you'd think. The look of the Matrix depends on what grid you're on, the programs you're running, and a bunch of other factors. Luckily, there is a sort of "base version" that forms the foundation of everyone's Matrix experience.

In this base version, the Matrix is a black flatland under a black sky. This virtual plain is lit with the glow of the icon of your commlink (or deck) and other icons around you, one for each device and persona connected to the Matrix. The plain is a projection of the whole world made flat, so the icons get more and more sparse the farther out you look.

There are uncounted billions of icons in the Matrix. Devices have icons in the Matrix in sort of the same way that living things have auras in astral space. This could get overwhelming, but some background tech keeps things from getting out of control.

The first piece of assistance comes from your commlink, which automatically filters out the least interesting icons. Do you want to know the virtual location of every music player in the world? Right, neither do I. So the Matrix will usually show you an icon for an individual's personal area network (PAN), not every device in that network (although it makes exceptions for interesting or dangerous devices in that network, such as a gun). Additionally, the farther away devices are from you in the real world, the dimmer their icons are in the Matrix; this is partly because your commlink figures the farther ones aren't as interesting to you, but mostly because the connection is a bit slower due to the distance. Matrix gear renders the far-off devices and personas as dim, muted, or flickering icons. Also cutting down on the visual noise is the fact that some icons are deliberately hidden from view, such as locks and other security devices, baby monitors, maintenance monitors, and of course people who prefer not to be seen.

To understand the uses of virtual reality and how people balance the meat world with the virtual one, let's

look at some typical Matrix uses. Let's say that you're in your car, driving home from work, school, or wherever you usually drive home from. You let the car's autopilot handle the driving and drop into VR to start dinner. Once you check into VR, your car, the road, and everything nearby drop from view, and instead you see the Matrix's plane of stars. You think about going to your home node, and boom, you go, streaking forward like a comet. As you get close, you see all of the devices that make up your home network, and you head for the one that represents your fridge. The icon for the fridge looks like a small fridge, with a list of the food (which the fridge's electronics automatically update with what's actually inside it). You see frozen pizza on the list and decide to go with a frozen pizza. You then reach out to your stove's controls (appearing as some dials over a warm, homey glow) and fire up the oven to pre-heat to 230°. It's a bit nippy outside, so you set your drink dispenser (which you've made look like a beer tap in VR) to start warming the soy base, and since you're feeling luxurious you hit the controls for chocolate flavoring. Sill in VR, you zip back to your car, which cheerfully tells you that you've got another ten minutes, enough time to visit your favorite social networking host.

Speaking of hosts, the big hosts are the most interesting spots in the Matrix landscape, and they're the things hovering above you when you log on. No matter where you go in the Matrix, they're always up there. One of the critical things to understand about hosts is that, unlike the devices in your house, they are not necessarily the representations of a specific device or location in the meat world. Hosts are part of the Matrix, rather than being a single device, so you can access them from anywhere without worrying about the distance involved.

The next important thing to know is that the inside of a host is a lot different from the outside. For one thing, it's often bigger on the inside than the outside. It's also a virtual environment of its own, with clear boundaries indicating where it starts and the rest of the Matrix, for most intents and purposes, ends.

But let's get back to the social networking host you decide to check into on your way home. The one you're going to does not have any particular entry requirements, so you don't have to endure the virtual equivalent of an entry line. You just zoom to the host, fly over the border, and you're almost ready to go in. On the inside, this particular host looks like a classy perpetual cocktail party, with a sculpted look that swanky lounges in the physical world would kill to have. Before you go into the actual party, you enter a private changing room, where you can make your icon look more appropriate for the party. Maybe pick out a stylish black suit or a little black dress, then add a tie or neckerchief for a splash of color. Get the outfit and your virtual hair set, and you're ready to mingle.

Or maybe a come-as-you-are sports bar is more your style. That host has booths for visitors that change size depending on the number of people in it, so they're always full but not too cozy. Or possibly games are more your style, joining your friends for board games, or puzzles, or grand adventures. Or you could go to a cat fanciers' clubhouse. Or a movie theater. Or a zero-G simulated spacecraft. The inside of a host is limited only by its owner's preferences and imagination.

Those are the general outlines of the Matrix; now let's dive into what and who you'll encounter.

THE POPULATION OF THE MATRIX

Every icon in the Matrix is one of six things: a persona, a device, a PAN, a file, a host, or a mark. Occasionally, you might also see a datastream, a transfer of data that looks like a thin beam of flickering, multi-colored light. Datastreams are normally filtered out of your Matrix view because if they weren't, they'd be the only thing you would see. If you want, you can dial back on the filtering, but the streams pass by so quickly that you can't tell where they're coming from or going to without snooping on whatever is sending or receiving them, and that would be illegal (and we'd never do anything illegal in the Matrix, right?).

PERSONAS

A persona is more or less what it sounds like: a person in the Matrix. A persona is the combination of a user and a device that gets the user onto the Matrix. The fact that the device has a user overrides the device's normal icon status, turning it into a persona. A persona is usually based on a commlink, cyberdeck, or rigged vehicle or drone, although technomancers are a sort of device-less persona.

Persona icons usually look like the people they represent (although who can resist making a nip here, a tuck there, a facelift, and maybe some nicer hair?), sometimes with a splash of style like flashing eyes, hair coloring, or a tastefully understated aura. There are wilder looks out there, but shadowrunners often shy away from them, as they draw too much attention and can be considered unprofessional. On the other hand, sometimes drawing attention is exactly the point, so base your look on however professional (or distracting) you want for the situation you're in.

There's a lot of variety to be had in persona icons. Just about any creature or animate object is fair game: animals, moving statues, griffins (popular among teens these days for some reason), steam-powered robots, zombies, aliens, just about anything that can walk and talk. The Matrix protocols will stop you from designing an icon for your persona if it isn't intuitively a persona, so you couldn't have an icon that is a dust speck, a Greek column, or a cube, for example. They'll also stop you from making something smaller than adult-dwarf-sized or bigger than adult-troll-sized.

DEVICES

Device icons in the Matrix represent electronic devices in the real world, from your music player to your commlink to your car and beyond. By default, a device's icon looks like the object it represents, in miniature if the real thing is larger than a person. It has controls of some kind, often the same controls it has in meat space, but not necessarily. The Ares Mobmaster riot control vehicle, for example, is famous for its unorthodox Roman chariot icon complete with reins to drive the vehicle.

Basic Matrix protocols require device icons to provide some hint of their real-life function. A firearm's icon looks like a weapon (even if that weapon is a tomahawk, like the icon of the Super Warhawk pistol), a vehicle's icon looks like a vehicle, a lock's icon looks like a lock, a refrigerator looks like a cold box for food, etc. The restrictions on devices aren't as stringent as on personas, as long as form suggests function at a glance.

PANS

Most individuals have multiple electronic devices on them at once, and having icons for each one show up would provide too much visual clutter in the Matrix. Often, what shows up instead is an icon representing an individual's personal area network. This icon often looks similar to the physical device that serves as master for the network, such as a commlink, but individuals will sometimes choose a design or logo that means something to them (such as sports team logos, Concrete Dreams album covers, or corporate designs). Some devices are not merged into the single PAN icon; if an individual is carrying a wireless-enabled gun—or any other wireless device that might kill you—it will show up separately so that it can be identified rapidly. Unless, of course, the user has gone to the trouble to hide that icon, but that'll be covered later.

FILES

A file is a collection of data. It can be a film, a song, a book, financial records, an image, a news article, and so on. It can even be a collection of other files (a "folder"). Files have icons that are smaller than persona icons, typically small enough to fit in the palm of the virtual hand. All file icons have a default appearance in the Matrix—a glowing cube or other polyhedron that can be opened to reveal its contents—but few Matrix users are so lazy and uninspired as to leave their files' icons with such a boring look. A text file might have an icon that is a book, a scroll, a data pad, or even stone tablets. Sound files look like speakers, musical notes or instruments, and so forth, while video might look like a film projector, a trid set, or an old-fashioned movie screen. Again, form suggests function is the rule in the Matrix.

HOSTS

Hosts are virtual places you can go in the Matrix. They have no physical location, being made up of the stuff of the Matrix itself. From the outside, hosts are as big as buildings in the electronic landscape, some of the largest being about the size of Manhattan (a limit imposed by the Corporate Court's Grid Overwatch Division to prevent the virtual sky from being *completely* dominated by the mega-hosts). The size of a host and its virtual altitude are related to its importance and influence in the modern world. Your local Stuffer Shack has a host icon that's roughly the size of the building it's in, and it sits low to the "ground," about on the same level as most of the devices in the Matrix. The Atlantean Foundation's host, on the other hand, floats about a virtual kilometer above the twinkling datascape and is about the size of the biggest skyraker building in the physical world. Bigger still is the Shiawase Mainframe, which is a slowly rotating sphere about a hundred kilometers up and almost twenty kilometers in diameter.

The host icons themselves look like just about anything the owners want. If you look up into the Matrix night you'll see corporate logos, lavish building façades, and constellations of hosts. You might recognize the Seattle ACHE's ziggurat shape, or the mother-and-child logo of Humanis, or (if you have access) the three orbiting spheres of JackPoint.

Inside a host is a completely different story. A host can be (and usually is) bigger on the inside than on the outside. A host's internal sculpting is internally regulated, so while outsiders' icons conform to standard Matrix requirements, the host itself doesn't have to. The host can be a maze, an open space, have strange gravity or none at all, be hot, cold, loud, quiet, and everything in between. Most hosts stick close to reality to make it easier and more comfortable for its patrons, but some offer stranger or even downright bizarre sculpting.

MATRIX AUTHENTICATION RECOGNITION KEYS

A Matrix authentication recognition key, or *mark* if you're not a fan of rattling off fancy technological nomenclature, is how the Matrix keeps track of which personas have access to which devices, files, hosts, and other personas. Marks look like, well, marks—small personalized labels or tattoos on whichever icons you place them. Your marks can look like anything you like, as long as they're small, fit onto other icons, and have some thematic link to you or your icon.

For example, let's say you're using the icon of a neon green octopus. Your marks might look like neon green sucker marks. If you had a cowboy icon, your marks might look like cattle brands. If your icon were a vintage movie star, your marks might look like lipstick kisses.

Normally, marks are invisible to anyone except the person who placed them. To see other marks on an icon

HOST: DANTE'S INFERNO

Dante's Inferno is a premiere nightclub with locations in Seattle and Hong Kong. Its motif matches its name, with nine levels of dance floors descending from the entrance downward. What makes it unique is that its Matrix host is a perfect match to the physical locations. Images of patrons in the real world are projected into the host, and virtual visitors in the host can be seen in augmented reality by the physical patrons. While Dante's is in three different locations (two physical and one virtual), all three places overlap.

To make this work, Dante's host mimics reality. Its virtual physics match real physics, and flying is strictly forbidden. Additionally, the host blocks persona icons that don't look at least mostly like the user they represent. Also off-limits are persona icons that look like damned souls (reserved for staff) and demons or devils (which are security and IC). The host's simsense library lets VR patrons order almost any food and drink in existence, although watch out for the hard stuff if you're using hot-sim—they mix those drinks strong.

(or your own icon), you have to analyze it. Seeing a mark does not automatically tell you who put it there, though. Usually, you can only recognize a mark if you have already seen the persona responsible for the mark, or if you're familiar with his or her marking style.

Marks are routinely invited and given for normal, everyday, legal use of various services. They act as keys, permission slips, invitations, and account privileges on every icon in the virtual world. For example, the Seattle Public Library invites over 50,000 marks per day for its VR books, films, trideos, and other items in its collection. While the great percentage of mark traffic is legitimate, hackers try to get marks illegally to facilitate their own plans.

THE MATRIX: FOR YOU AND AGAINST YOU

It's important to remember that the Matrix exists to be used. That means that for the most part, the look and feel of various hosts is geared toward being approachable, not putting up obstacles that might prevent people from doing their work or conducting their business. It is a safe environment, with security built into its operating systems and protocols. Ever since the recent change in Matrix protocols, the structure is monitored by the Grid Overwatch Division of the Corporate Court, who act as a sort of Matrix police force devoted to protecting users (including innocent children, natch) from online predators, piracy, and fraud.

That's the corp brochure version of the Matrix, anyway. The real motives behind the Matrix, particularly its current structure, are profit and control. The megacorporations and the Grid Overwatch Division have been working on "The Matrix Problem" for decades, searching for a holy grail of Matrix design that will let them maximize their profits while minimizing their risks, and they may have finally found something close. The system is set up so that the corps always have the advantage, hackers always are at a disadvantage, and everybody else is stuck somewhere between.

One of the keys to the new system is the network of overlapping grids, which need to be understood if you plan on doing any serious Matrix work.

GRIDS

If you want to get on the Matrix, you need a grid. A grid is what a Matrix service provider uses to connect you to the digital world. When you connect to the Matrix, you are on the grid of your provider, much the same way an early 21st century cell phone user would be on their phone company's network.

Different grids cover customers in different areas; there are global grids provided by each of the Big Ten and local grids sponsored in part by local governments. Accessing these grids costs money, and each of them presents a slightly different view of the Matrix (although the inside of hosts look the same no matter what grid you're on, as that's controlled by the hosts). It's all still the "real" Matrix, of course, but the icons that belong to your grid's owner look a bit bigger and more shiny, and the advertising is slanted in ways that benefit the grid's owners.

For example, when you're connected to the Matrix through Seattle's local grid, Emerald City, the normally black Matrix sky is tinged a gemstone green, and the hosts that are closely related to Seattle are a bit brighter. NeoNET icons are also a bit larger when you're using Emerald City, because the main sponsor/owner of the local grid is NeoNET. If you were on NeoNET's global grid, you'd see much the same thing, without the emphasis on Seattle or the green sky.

If you can't pay for access to a grid, well, you're not completely out of luck. The corps would never have been able to get away with completely throttling access to the Matrix, so there's a public grid provided by underfunded non-profits, outdated satellites, and the occasional good Samaritan who's willing to share a wireless access point or two. The public grid is slow, low-resolution, and unreliable, but at least it's globally accessible. It's the Barrens of the Matrix.

As you'd expect, the grid you're on says something about your social standing. You might find notes like "Posted from the Renraku Grid" tacked onto the end of status updates. Corps market their own grids heavily, offering perks and free commlink upgrades every year or two. People on the public grid are viewed as

second-class citizens. High-class hosts advertise "No public-grid connections allowed" to show how their clientele are elite.

You can "hop" between grids, but which grids you can access depend on where you are in the world. You can get on the public or any global grid from anywhere on the planet. Local grids can only be accessed if you're physically in the grid's service area. For example, if you're on Netzwerks Berlin, you could see and interact with a commlink that is on Seattle's Emerald City, but you wouldn't be able to hop to Emerald City grid itself.

LOOKING DOWN: GRID OVERWATCH DIVISION

The Grid Overwatch Division, or GOD for short, is responsible for securing the Matrix from hackers and other unwanted intruders, especially the parts connecting the various hosts and users (security with hosts falls more on the heads of the host owners). Each grid has its own sub-division (even the public grid), with its own financing and operatives. A sub-division (referred to as a demiGOD) watches its entire grid, keeping an eye out for misbehaving users and illegal activity. The grids have a warning system built-in, a subtle but telltale ripple that occurs when the automated software detects illegal or unauthorized use of the gird. It's not much, but GOD is watching, and if they see enough ripples to find and identify a hacker, they can trace his physical location and boot him off the Matrix using the mechanisms built into each grid.

This is not to say the megacorps have made nice and are now holding hands singing Kumbayah. Far from it; the Matrix is an even hotter intercorporate battleground than ever, it's just that the AAAs want to keep their battleground to themselves. While the demiGODs are separate and even competitive (the *Crash of the Titans* reality trid show is new but surging in popularity), they are still part of GOD and highly cooperative against hackers. They share their information in real-time, often faster than hackers can hop to another grid. Their operatives, called G-men (complete with 1930s-era FBI persona icons), technically only have jurisdiction over their assigned grid, but they can request and receive clearance, authority, and cooperation from the demiGOD of another grid in seconds during an investigation. The G-men investigate cases that aren't lengthy enough or blatant enough to leave sufficient ripples for the demiGODs to track through standard overwatch alone. They also handle cases where a hacker has been kicked off the grid, supporting any security or law enforcement forces that the grid's owner wants to send against the hacker in the physical world.

AUGMENTED WORLD

So far much of the discussion of the Matrix and its collected icons has focused on how things look in virtual reality, but that's not how most people interact with the Matrix on a daily or hourly basis. Most people who use VR use it to visit hosts, view entertainment, or play games, but a lot of people find the disembodied sensation of virtual reality to be uncomfortable, or even disturbing. The majority of people interact with the Matrix in augmented reality, using their commlink.

A commlink is combination computer, smartphone, media player, passport, wallet, credit card, Matrix browser, chip reader, GPS navigator, digital camera, and portable gaming device. And possibly a few other things, if you've got a really nice one. It's got all of the necessary software already loaded, but unlike a cyberdeck it has no space for cyberprograms or other hacking tools.

Most models are small enough to fit in your pocket, on a belt clip, or on your wrist. If a pocket version isn't your style, commlinks are available in a number of other forms, including headwear, glasses, jewelry, cranial implant, belt buckles, and other accessories.

LIFE WITH A COMMLINK

Your commlink does more than just sit in your pocket (or on your head). It interprets the Matrix around you to give you extra information and capability that can be useful in civilian life and vital in the shadows. This is done with **augmented reality**, or AR. AR overlays information on things in real-life in a way only you can perceive.

Let's say you're walking down the street in Downtown Seattle's shopping district. Your commlink may seem like it's sitting quietly, but in fact it's quite busy. It's regularly communicating with other devices and hosts around you, sharing information about your location and your movement. The other devices and hosts are sending information right back, telling you who else is out there, what stores are having sales, what movies are playing at which theaters, and so on. If you look at your commlink screen, you'd have all that information overlaid on an image of where you are, providing a mini heads-up display. But let's say you live in the *current* decade, and you don't interact with the world around you with just a screen. You may have glasses, or sunglasses, or contacts, or goggles, or cybereyes, or *something* that puts this information right in your field of vision. Overlaid on the world are icons telling you that shoes like the ones you bought last year are now half off, and there's a dotted line leading you to the theater showing the sequel to the trid show you thought was wiz, and the people walking down the street are occasionally highlighted by glowing auras—nice blue ones representing your friends, glaring red ones telling you that someone you know and should be avoiding is coming close. You have more than just your natural vision—you've got everything in the database you're carrying with you.

The civilized world adapted quickly to augmented reality, mostly because it's easier than printing things on paper or making signs. **Augmented reality objects**, or

AROs (pronounced "arrows"), are used to show information and decorate spaces on the cheap. Stores have their logos blazoned in 3D above their door, restaurants offer animated menus complete with tantalizing images of their food, street names hover over every intersection, decorators use AR objects to spruce up interiors, all viewable in AR for anyone who has the capability, which is pretty much everybody. The unintended side effect is that things can look a bit dingy when you turn off your AR display, but that's the price of progress.

You don't have to be an expert to make an ARO. If you want to send directions to your place from the party, you can draw a line on an AR map and share it with your friends. If you want to point out a person in a crowd for a buddy, you can make an ARO highlighting that person and send it. You can choose which of your AROs are seen by which people, so you can keep it private or, if you're feeling impish, put vulgar AROs on RFID tags and scatter them around town for all to see. Of course, other people can filter out the AROs they don't want to see, and so can you.

Augmented reality isn't just visual information, either. You can hear audio AROs if you have earbuds or a cyberear. AROs can be tactile if you have a haptic device like AR gloves. Engineers are still working on putting physical scent into AR displays, and we'd rather not talk about AR flavors. On the other hand, if you use AR with a direct neural interface like trodes or an implant, you can use all of your senses to view AR without any extra devices.

Most of what you keep on your commlink are files, this includes music, your SIN (fake or otherwise), licenses (also fake or otherwise), maps, email messages, your contact book, AROs, and so on. These files are visible to people who can see your commlink in the Matrix, so most people keep all of their files in a protected folder.

DIRECT NEURAL INTERFACE

A direct neural interface, or DNI, connects your brain to electronic devices. Direct neural interface (along with a sim module) is required for VR use, but DNI is also useful for AR in that you don't need any additional gear like earbuds or an image link to see or hear augmented reality objects.

How do you sign up? You get DNI by wearing trodes, or having an implanted datajack, commlink, or cyberdeck. And if you're using a sim module along with your DNI, you can get a sort of "super AR mode" where you can also feel, smell, and taste your AR experience.

MATRIX ACTIONS FOR THE NON-HACKER

So you're not the team's hacker, but you've got this commlink on your character sheet. What is it good for, you may ask? A lot of things, but not so many that you need to memorize this entire chapter. Here's a short list of Matrix rules and actions you can use to get all you can out of your commlink.

YOUR GRID

You should know which grid you're using, but unless you've bought an upgrade, your grid is dictated by your lifestyle:

Low or lower: public grid

Middle: local grid

High: global grid—pick one of the Big Ten megacorps to be your grid provider.

Luxury: you can be on any grid you want, chummer.

YOUR COMMLINK'S MATRIX ATTRIBUTES

Your gamemaster will occasionally ask for one of two Matrix attributes: Data Processing or (if your hacker isn't doing her job) Firewall. Unless your commlink is a custom job, both of these attributes are equal to your commlink's rating. Just keep a note by your commlink entry in your character sheet's gear section.

FIVE MATRIX ACTIONS

As a typical Matrix user, there are only a few Matrix actions you might want to take a look at:

Change Icon: If you're tooling around in VR, you'll need this action from p. 238 to get the look you want.

Edit File: If you're going to do any text, audio, or video editing, or you just like to write reports, you might want to know about the Edit File action, p. 239. You also use this action to protect files on your commlink, which is what seasoned shadowrunners like to call a Good Idea.

Full Matrix Defense: If your commlink or any connected devices are under attack, and you're not sure what to do, just turn on all of your commlink's active defenses with this action, p. 240.

Matrix Search: After communication, googling is the biggest advantage to having the Matrix in your pocket. Start your search on p. 241.

Send Message: This action will probably the main use for your commlink. It's not complicated, but you can read up on it on p. 242.

So where do you store all of the things you want to keep? Pictures from your Aunt Edna's wedding, credit information, your SIN, every book and movie you've bought, all the programs you might want to run—all of it fits on your commlink (or cyberdeck if you prefer). In fact, every device on the Matrix has a massive amount of storage space, unthinkable amounts by early 21st century standards. Your gamemaster might decide that a device is too small or low-grade or a file so massively large that a problem comes up, but such problems are extremely rare. Even if it does, the entire world is wireless, so you shouldn't have trouble finding an alternate storage location.

SHADOWRUNNING WITH A COMMLINK

Your commlink could be the most important piece of gear you own. It keeps you in contact with the rest of your team, even if you're scattered across the entire sprawl. You can share information like images, floor plans, and tactical instructions almost instantly, even in the middle of a firefight. It gives you AR displays for your surroundings, not just what other people put there but AROs created by your companions, which come in handy when your shaman tags a mage among the enemy security forces or a spotter drone maps the location of all the guard dogs it can find. A good commlink can also protect your own devices (including your gun) from opposing hackers. Some shadowrunners prefer to go without one, but most agree that the commlink is right up there with ammo in terms of usefulness.

THE DIGITAL UNDERGROUND

Not everyone is content to surf the Matrix in peace. Some users are protestors, flying in the face of the megacorps' power over the grids. Some are curious, poking at secure hosts and pushing boundaries that GOD and its demiGODs would prefer remain untouched. Some are angel-headed hipsters trying to find some connection to the starry dynamo of the virtual night. Some want to free the flow of information from its corporate shackles. Some just have a habit of ignoring the rules.

All these digital delinquents are known as *hackers*. In the heavily computerized world of the 2070s, a shadowrunning team can go a long way with a hacker on their side. Hackers can pry at secrets, control devices, and even destroy electronics from a distance, not to mention defend against opposing hackers and spiders. Hackers come in two main flavors: deckers and technomancers.

DECKERS

A decker is someone who uses a cyberdeck (hence the name) to break the rules of the Matrix. A cyberdeck—usually just called a deck—is like a commlink with some extra features. It is a bit bigger than a commlink, about the size of a small tablet or a spiral-bound notebook, or a pair of playing card decks. Its specialized functions and questionable legality make it far more expensive than ordinary commlinks. The cyberdeck has advanced electronics and firmware based on reverse-engineered protocols used in Matrix security. In short, a cyberdeck is the tool you need to be a hacker.

A deck can perform all of the functions of a commlink, but its primary purpose is hacking in the Matrix. Cyberdecks have a built-in sim module because they are so often used in VR, so a decker only needs a datajack or other DNI device to make that connection, instead of needing the full sim implant.

Deckers are far and away the most common type of hacker. They come to the profession out of necessity, a desire for profit, or a sense of mischief. Or all three. They are heavily dependent on their skills, and they need good gear to make sure their skills shine. They can usually maintain and even build their own electronic devices.

TECHNOMANCERS

Technomancers are able to interface both in AR and VR without the aid of a sim module, image link, or any other electronic devices. Strictly speaking, technomancers aren't magical, but they're just as mysterious as magicians were after the Awakening. The origins of a technomancer's power and how she makes things happen are still unknown to science. Like magicians, technomancers make up a tiny fraction of the population of the Earth. Also like magicians, they are generally distrusted and misunderstood, sometimes to the point of paranoia.

Not all technomancers are hackers, but to the general public they might as well be. In the media, the word technomancer almost always means hacker, and the word "hacker" means cyber-terrorist. Many national and local governments require technomancers to register with the authorities, even if they have little talent or power. The perception of technomancers is that they are able to control a person's electronics, reading files at will, breaching every moment of privacy. They say that technomancers can see you through the devices in your home, trace your children, ruin your reputation and credit rating, launch nuclear missiles, drain your bank accounts, and steal your identity. As a result of the paranoia, most technomancers keep their identity under wraps, sometimes hiding their abilities behind dummy commlinks.

Technomancers are rare, but they have amazing abilities in the Matrix, doing things that by most reports should be impossible. They use their powers and abilities to bend the Matrix to their will and summon digital servants. They are generally not the figures public paranoia makes them out to be—but they have enough power to make it seem that the paranoia has at least one foot in reality.

(MIS)USING THE MATRIX

The first step in hacking the Matrix is conceiving and understanding what you might be able to accomplish. The example below provides a narrative of someone making their illicit way through the Matrix. It'll show you some of the things that are possible. Once we've set that up, we'll show you how to do the things it shows.

There's a lot that goes on in the Matrix. It's a big place, bigger than the real world if you include all of the hosts. It's also a very versatile place. Everybody in the civilized world (aside from a few barely worth mentioning since, you know, they don't show up on the Matrix) has some basic computer skills. They can surf the Matrix, search for information, send messages to one another, and use basic AR interfaces. That doesn't make them Matrix experts, and it definitely doesn't make them hackers. To really walk the virtual walk, you need a lot more.

CRACKING THE MATRIX SPINE

The Matrix is a controlled environment, with corporate owners wanting to keep things moving at their pace, according to their specifications. If something suits their goals, it moves through the Matrix just fine, encountering few problems or hang-ups. If it doesn't meet their goals, they shut it down as fast as they can before it causes too much trouble.

Hackers don't meet their goals, and they are paid to create trouble. They're the fly in the ointment, the fart in the cathedral, the droog in the milk bar. They're chaos amidst carefully cultivated order, and they're fast and nimble if they want to stay free and keep their synapses at their normal temperature.

Hackers can get an important advantage with their gear and equipment, but that's something anyone with a decent pile of nuyen can buy. For the true hacker, it's not the gear that sets them apart—it's how they use it. Their

EXAMPLE

BK relaxes at a small table outside a Downtown café. For Seattle, it's a nice morning: The sun peeks through the clouds occasionally, and he'd be able to see Mt. Rainier from his table if he wasn't surrounded by skyscrapers. He's in AR mode, with device icons superimposed on his vision. Right now he's filtered out most of the icons, but since the waitress hasn't protected her commlink's privacy, he's flipping through her music collection in a little virtual window that is linked by a pointer to a pouch at her hip. Seeing an album he likes (and having little respect for the law), he sleazes a mark onto her commlink, and a little bee sting that only he can see appears on its icon. The mark flashes a little as it helps him copy the music file from her commlink. He knows this bit of mischief could be discovered by the Grid Overwatch Division, but he doesn't care. He's already enjoying the first cut of the album.

The bank across the street opens for business, and BK gets to work. He has been waiting for the bank's employees to arrive and take files out of the archives of the bank's host for the workday. Now that the files are out of the archives, he can access them if he can get into the bank's heavily protected private host.

He crosses the street and melts into the alley behind the bank. There is an emergency exit here with a maglock that is slaved to the bank's WAN. That means the lock is protected by the bank's host, but it also makes the lock a point of vulnerability. He plugs a data cable from his deck to the lock's universal port and sits against the wall, flipping to VR.

BK's icon, a swarm of bees (well, a dark ball with bees flitting around it; he'll get a better icon after this run), appears next to the lock in the Matrix. He sees the dark Matrix sky but barely notices it, concentrating instead on the lock and the gothic monolith of the bank host floating behind it. He ignores the bank's firewalls surrounding the lock, attacking the lock through his direct link. Another bee sting appears, this time on the lock, and in a microsecond's flicker, an identical mark appears on the lock's master, the bank host.

The hacker grins as much as a swarm of bees can as he flits into the host. On the inside, the host looks like a large modern office, occasionally pulsing with the blue light of local datastreams, complete with cubicles and (for some reason) restrooms. Icons walk busily back and forth, which BK rightly assumes means no flying allowed. BK changes his icon to something a bit less conspicuous: a low-level sarariman in a dark, conservative business suit. He then starts looking for the file he wants. Meanwhile, a stone-faced security guard (Patrol IC with a socially acceptable skin) is checking out every icon, looking for users that don't belong. BK is running silent, and the IC misses him ... this time.

BK finds an old-fashioned manila folder that is actually a file listing all of the patrons who have safe deposit boxes at the bank. It's the one he wants. He starts to copy it to his deck but notices a tiny padlock hanging from the corner of the file. The list is protected, and he'll have to remove the protection before he can copy it. That's going to take time. He glances at his watch, actually looking at a readout of the estimated time until the local demiGOD finds him: he's got some time, but not as much as he'd like. He would have more time if he hadn't stolen that album before the run, but he's really enjoying track three, and he should be okay as long as nothing goes wrong.

He reaches for the lock, firing up his cracking utilities, and something goes wrong. The host has undoubtedly already marked him and will be launching IC any second. Any second later, a three-meter-tall gorilla with the head of a lion dramatically

quick thinking, their imagination, and their relentless coding skills put them above the competition, letting them dance their way through a Matrix that's constantly trying to force them to color inside the lines.

Good hackers start with good skills (p. 226). Without those, they're just another idiot who spent too much money on electronic gear they don't know how to use. Once they have the skills that set them apart, they need the right gear or their skills are going to come up short. Knowing the Matrix attributes and how they can help or limit them (p. 226) will make sure they get the most out of their skills. Armed with this knowledge, they can choose the cyberdeck (p. 227) that's right for them. The good stuff isn't cheap. Hell, even the not-so-good stuff will set you back a pile of nuyen, so hackers need to learn how their deck might get damaged and how they can avoid having it turn into a useless brick of plastic and rare earth elements (p. 228).

Once they have their skills and gear ready to rock, hackers need to decide how they're going to access the Matrix (**User Modes**, p. 229) and how to use the structure of the Matrix to make the right connections (p. 230). If they don't understand the different grids involved and how to get on them (p. 233), they'll be behind the competition. They also have to understand what they're seeing—which icons are devices, which are personae, and why it matters (p. 234). They also need to be able to see the things they are not supposed to see, while also keeping themselves out of sight when necessary (**Matrix Perception**, p. 235).

When it's time to get down to business, hackers show they're the alpha dog in the traditional way—by marking their territory. Placing marks (p. 236) on the devices they want to control gets them the access they are not supposed to have. Once your marks are in place, it's the hacker's time to shine and take the actions to make the Matrix do the weird and unexpected things their team needs (p. 237). They're not alone in there, though, so there's always the chance they'll have to go to battle against IC or a security spider (p. 247).

HOST: JACKPOINT

JackPoint is a Matrix host for shadowrunners, designed and administered by shadowrunners. While it isn't the only one of its kind, it is the best known and most widely trusted of all shadow sites. The host itself appears as a set of independent rooms floating in a vast grid that is an homage to the old-school style of decking. The rules are pretty loose in the host, as befits its "be yourself" attitude toward visitors. Most of the decor is abstract, and a lot of the icons are simple geometric solids with easy-to-read labels floating nearby. Some areas, like the cybercafe and the Museum of Shadowrunning, have a more styled sculpting, with visitors asked to obey some semblance of the laws of physics to maintain a slightly more normal atmosphere. The most restrictions are in place on the Memorial, where strict silence, gravity, and limits on outlandish iconography are enforced among the monuments and epitaphs to fallen shadowrunners.

EXAMPLE, CONT.

drops from the ceiling. His deck helpfully identifies it as Killer IC, and BK swears loudly. With the level of security on this host, Killer IC is only the beginning of his troubles. With any luck, he thinks, the bank's security spider is having a long breakfast this morning. BK's team needs that file, but now it's not going to be easy to obtain.

With a swipe, BK rubs out the mark the host put on him, noting grimly that it looks like a claw mark before it dissolves. Even though the mark's off, the host has spotted him, and that means its IC knows who and where he is. The gorilla-lion IC program hits him with a torso-sized fist that sends the decker staggering, but he's not defeated by a long shot. His deck starts overheating, but he feels it as a dull ache in VR.

BK waves an arm and digital smoke appears all around him, hiding him from the host and its IC. The host launches more IC, a large bloodhound-shaped Track program. In a way, the hacker thinks, the Track IC is more dangerous than the Killer. If the bank finds out that BK's meat body is just outside, security goons will be on him in seconds.

The gorilla-lion is looking to the Patrol IC for guidance when the stoic security guard is struck out of nowhere by a massive swarm of bees. The Patrol IC lurches, jerks, and explodes into a million motes of light that slowly die out. The Patrol IC was the only way the host could find him, at least as long as he doesn't screw up again. BK has just enough time to laugh before a new stone-faced security guard begins to coalesce as the host launches a new copy of the Patrol IC.

Working quickly, he tries to smash the file's tiny lock. Again it proves too tough. The backlash from the host's firewall slams up his arm and into his deck, which crackles slightly in real life. This is one tough file protection. The host finishes launching the new Patrol IC, so BK tries one more time, slamming into the lock with all his virtual strength. This time, the lock gives way and vanishes. The Patrol IC starts searching for the intruder with inhuman resolve. BK copies the file and starts to jack out, just in time to see the security spider, a samurai wielding a glowing sword, enter the host from his long breakfast to join the fight—joining it too late.

The sudden jolt caused by the dump from virtual reality to actual reality painfully jars BK, and he stumbles to his feet. It's not the cleanest getaway, but it's one he can walk away from. The decker heads home as nonchalantly as he can to share his findings and repair his damaged deck, leaving bank security to try to figure out how he did it.

CYBERCOMBAT

Fighting in the Matrix isn't as straightforward as it is in meatspace. It's not just a back-and-forth slugfest of harmful code, crackling encryption, and smoking electronics. Sure, a couple personas can just lay into each other with Data Spikes, but the most successful cybercombatants are more subtle, some would say treacherous.

We recommend you read the entire Matrix chapter before you fire your Hammer program in anger, but if you want to hit the highlights, here's a quick list for you.

Initiative: User Modes, p. 229
Basic Attack: Data Spike, p. 239
Full Defense: Full Matrix Defense, p. 240
Matrix Damage: Damage in the Matrix, p. 228
Damaging Hardware: Bricking, p. 228

Hackers aren't limited to the lives of digital ninja anymore. Hackers can pull out the big guns and blast through the Matrix (p. 238), slamming marks on targets and taking what they want. They can also fry gear in the real world (p. 239), killing drones, destroying weapons, and otherwise fighting side-by-side with their teammates.

The final pieces of knowledge they need are the other elements they might encounter online—the hosts, IC, and programs that make life interesting (p. 246). Armed with that knowledge, hackers will be ready to help the Matrix shake off its shackles and become the raw, free flow of data it was always meant to be.

Then there's one more piece of the puzzle. Once we've covered how deckers make their way through the Matrix, we need to look at the technomancer side of things to see how they operate and swim in the Matrix that they see as an ocean of data all around them (p. 249).

MATRIX SKILLS

To do anything more involved than sending email in the Matrix, you'll need some skills. Specifically, you'll need the skills in the Cracking Skill Group and the Electronics Skill Group. Here's a quick rundown of those skills and what they do:

USING COMPUTER

The Computer skill represents your ability to use computers. Common functions for this skill include editing files, erasing marks, and searching the Matrix. It's also used in your Matrix Perception Tests, which can be vital in finding that Black IC before it stomps your neural pathways.

USING CYBERCOMBAT

Cybercombat is the skill to use when you're trying to wreck something or hurt someone in the Matrix. You can use it to damage electronics, break through defensive algorithms, and crash programs.

USING ELECTRONIC WARFARE

This skill is about controlling the airwaves, an important ability in a wireless world. It's good for jamming other people's signals with a jammer (or even your deck), hiding your own signature, and snooping on other people's datastreams.

USING HACKING

Hacking is about cleverly convincing the Matrix to do things it's not designed to do. It lets you find and exploit weaknesses in digital defenses, and otherwise use finesse in your Matrix mayhem.

USING HARDWARE

Hardware describes your ability to build, repair and manipulate electronic hardware. This skill is rarely used in the Matrix, but it encompasses everything that runs on the Matrix—and everything the Matrix runs on. It's very useful for fixing electronics that have been damaged by Matrix combat, not to mention upgrading your deck or building your own devices.

USING SOFTWARE

This skill is about creating programs and other code that runs in the Matrix. It's good for writing your own programs and analyzing strange code. If you've got the guts to try to handle a data bomb, you'll need some solid Software skills to keep it from going off in your face.

USING RESONANCE

The skills in the Resonance Skill Group are only usable by technomancers. These skills are used to thread complex forms and to compile sprites. If you're a technomancer and want to know how to use your mysterious powers, head on over to p. 249.

MATRIX ATTRIBUTES

Electronic devices run a lot of different applications, utilities, and code libraries to keep things working smoothly. Rather than list every single program running on a computer individually, the total effectiveness of these programs are described as **Matrix attributes**. These attributes are used as limits when performing Matrix actions and as part of your dice pool when defending against Matrix actions.

There are four Matrix attributes: Attack, Sleaze, Data Processing, and Firewall (abbreviated ASDF). Most devices (including commlinks) have only two Matrix attributes: Data Processing and Firewall. Decks and hosts have all four, including Attack and Sleaze.

Every Matrix action is categorized according to the Matrix attribute they fall under. For example, the Brute Force action is an Attack action, and the Hack on the Fly action is a Sleaze action. The Matrix attribute for an action serves as the limit for tests tied to that action.

ATTACK

Your Attack rating reflects the programs and utilities you have running on your deck that inject harmful code into other operating systems, or use brute-force algorithms to break encryptions and protections to lay the virtual smackdown. Attack software is high-risk, high-reward, because firewall protocols tend to treat it harshly, doing damage that could hurt your persona if you blow it. Attack actions are good for making quick break-ins, damaging devices, and dealing with Matrix threats in a very fast but loud way.

SLEAZE

The applications making up your Sleaze attribute mask your Matrix presence, probe the defenses of targets, and subtly alter a target system's code. Sleaze software is delicate, and one mistake will spill the soybeans on you to your target. Sleaze actions are good for intrusions in which you have plenty of time and in dealing with Matrix problems in a slow but quiet way.

DATA PROCESSING

Your Data Processing attribute measures your device's ability to handle information, datastreams, and files. It is used for Matrix actions that aren't, as a general rule, illegal.

FIREWALL

Your Firewall attribute is your protection against outside attacks. It contains code filters, file checkers, virus detection and eradication software, and other defensive programming. Firewall actions are defensive in nature. The most important role of the Firewall is as virtual armor against Matrix damage.

FILES & MATRIX ATTRIBUTES

Files do not have ratings (although protection on files does, **The Edit File** action, p. 239). Instead, they use the ratings of their owners when defending against Matrix actions.

CYBERDECKS

If you're a decker, your cyberdeck is your life's blood, your all-in-one ticket to controlling the Matrix. It provides you with your Matrix attributes, especially the Attack and Sleaze that are vital to hacking. It also has a built-in sim module, so all you need is a DNI to use it for VR right out of the box. Other important features include a universal data connector and about a meter of retractable data cable, so you can connect to other devices directly. A cyberdeck usually has a small screen for displaying status messages. It is most often a flat rectangle, but it can be just about any shape that has the same volume as a small book; the "hackpack" model, a cyberdeck in a belt pack, is popular for deckers on the go.

Each deck has a Device Rating, which determines its Matrix Condition Monitor and is used in a few other rules. It also has a listing for four attributes (called the Attribute Array), but it does not specifically list which numbers go with which attributes. This is because decks are more versatile than your average device or host. You can configure your deck for different uses at different times. There's also a listing for the number of programs you can run at a time on a deck, although you can have any number of them in storage.

DECK CONFIGURATION

When you first boot your deck, assign each of its four attribute values to one of the Matrix attributes. This covers the various software that you're running in your deck's memory. This lets you describe with ratings how much software your deck is currently running for offense, stealth, computing, and defense. For example, let's say you've got a Microtrónica Azteca 200 with the attribute values of 5, 4, 3, and 2. Your plan for the evening is to surf the Matrix legally, maybe play some games, find a movie, or just hang out in JackPoint. You assign your Matrix attributes Attack 2, Sleaze 3, Data Processing 5, and Firewall 4.

CYBERDECKS

CYBERDECKS	DEVICE RATING	ATTRIBUTE ARRAY	PROGRAMS	AVAILABILITY	COST
Erika MCD-1	1	4 3 2 1	1	3R	49,500¥
Microdeck Summit	1	4 3 3 1	1	3R	58,000¥
Microtrónica Azteca 200	2	5 4 3 2	2	6R	110,250¥
Hermes Chariot	2	5 4 4 2	2	6R	123,000¥
Novatech Navigator	3	6 5 4 3	3	6R	205,750¥
Renraku Tsurugi	3	6 5 5 3	3	9R	214,125¥
Sony CIY-720	4	7 6 5 4	4	12R	345,000¥
Shiawase Cyber-5	5	8 7 6 5	5	15R	549,375¥
Fairlight Excalibur	6	9 8 7 6	6	18R	823,250¥

RECONFIGURING YOUR DECK

You can reconfigure your deck whenever you like, rebalancing your software loadout, changing the allocation of Matrix attributes or re-arranging the programs currently available to you. Doing this is a Free Action that you may only perform on your own Action Phase. This is *not* a Matrix action. When you reconfigure your deck, you can either switch two of your deck's Matrix attributes, or swap a running program with a program you have stored on your deck that is not running. Additionally, you can load a program you own into a currently unused slot, or unload a program and leave an open slot.

For example, let's say you're hanging out in JackPoint and some asshat insults your avatar. You're feeling surly, so you take a swing at him. You weren't planning on mixing things up tonight, so at the moment your Attack is 2 and your Data Processing is 5. You'd prefer them to be the other way around, so you take a Free Action to swap the two attributes before you make your attack. With your Attack rating at 5, you'll be able to land the full force of whatever blow you've aimed at the mouthy jerk.

MATRIX DAMAGE

Each device in the Matrix has a Matrix Condition Monitor. This represents the device's ability to handle damaging code designed to make the device do things it's not supposed to do. As a device gets damaged, it overheats, suffers power spikes and dips, shorts out as components start failing, and eventually becomes damaged beyond functionality.

The Matrix Condition Monitor is similar to other Condition Monitors. Each device's Matrix Condition Monitor has 8 + (Device Rating / 2) boxes. Matrix damage is always resisted with Device Rating + Firewall. When a persona is hit for damage, the device it is running on takes that damage (except technomancers, who take it as Stun damage).

Unlike other forms of damage, there is no penalty for having Matrix damage until your Matrix Condition Monitor is completely filled. Matrix damage that becomes Stun damage for technomancers still does carry a penalty, though, as does Stun or Physical damage caused by biofeedback.

BRICKING

If the Matrix Condition Monitor of a device is completely filled, the device ceases functioning. This is called *bricking* a device. Devices that are bricked never fail non-spectacularly. Smoke, sparks, pops, bangs, sizzles, nasty smells, and occasionally even small fires are common features of a device in the process of becoming a brick. If you're using your deck in VR when it gets bricked, you are dumped from the Matrix and suffer dumpshock (see p. 229). A bricked device is damaged and useless until it is repaired (described in the next bit, Repairing Matrix Damage).

If a device is bricked, it stops working: batteries are drained, mechanical parts are fused or gummed up with melted internals, and so on. That said, not all devices are completely useless when bricked. A vibrosword is still sharp, a roto-drone glides to the ground on auto-gyro, a lock stays locked. The firing pin on an assault rifle might not work, but its bayonet works just fine for stabbing smug hackers. And you can't exactly brick a katana, ne? And don't panic when your tricked-out combat bike gets bricked; it will ride again ... if you know a competent technician.

EXAMPLE

Tesseract the decker is strolling down his favorite dark alley when he is accosted by a large and mean-looking ork. Being in no mood to trifle, Tesseract stares down the barrel of the ork's gun and sees it in his AR display as a Rating 2 smartgun. With a mental command to his Hermes Chariot cyberdeck (he's got a datajack and DNI, of course), he tosses a Data Spike at the weapon's Matrix icon, first swapping his Firewall 5 with his Attack 2 as a Free Action. He rolls his Cybercombat + Logic (12 dice) against the ork's Intuition + Firewall (a whopping 4 dice), getting 5 hits to the ork's 1 (4 net hits). The base DV of the attack is 5 Matrix damage (since it's an Attack 5 program), plus 4 for the net hits, for a total of 9 DV. The ork rolls the gun's Device Rating + Firewall to resist the damage and comes up with nothing. This fills all 9 boxes of the gun's Matrix Condition Monitor, bricking the weapon. The gun sparks, crackles, and smokes in the ork's hand, which distracts him enough for Tesseract to draw his own fuck-off-sized pistol from his coat.

REPAIRING MATRIX DAMAGE

If you have a device with Matrix damage, you can repair it with a toolkit, an hour of work, and a Hardware + Logic [Mental] test. Every hit you get can be used to either remove one box of Matrix damage or cut the time required in half; the first die spent toward time reduces the time to half an hour, the second to 15 minutes, and so on, to a minimum of one Combat Turn (3 seconds). Bricked or not, the device is off-line and unusable during the repair process.

If you critically glitch on the roll to repair your device, that's it. The device is permanently bricked. You can use it as a paperweight, an object lesson, or (if you need one) a brick. If you glitch, the device can be restored to functionality, but it becomes a bit glitchy (the gamemaster will tell you how at an appropriate moment).

NON-DEVICES AND MATRIX DAMAGE

IC programs and sprites have Matrix Condition Monitors. Like devices, they are unaffected by Matrix damage until they have a full Matrix Condition Monitor. IC and sprites cannot be repaired, but they lose all damage when they stop running or return to the Resonance.

Hosts and files can't be attacked with Matrix damage, so they don't have Matrix Condition Monitors. Technomancers don't have Matrix Condition Monitors, either. Instead all Matrix damage they take is converted to Stun damage to their person, but it is still resisted with their living persona's Device Rating + Firewall.

BIOFEEDBACK DAMAGE

Biofeedback damage is Matrix code that forces your sim module to misbehave badly. It makes your body go haywire the same way that Matrix damage screws up devices. This can cause temporary or even permanent damage to a deckers' body and brain. It's used by Black IC, Grid Overwatch Division G-men, and unscrupulous hackers and spiders, although it can also come from other sources inadvertently, like dumpshock or the damage riggers take when their vehicles and drones are damaged.

Biofeedback damage is only dangerous when you're in VR mode. Unless the attack says otherwise, biofeedback is Stun damage if you are using cold-sim VR and Physical damage in hot-sim VR. You resist biofeedback damage with Willpower + Firewall.

DUMPSHOCK & LINK-LOCKING

When you're disconnected from the Matrix while in VR without gracefully switching to AR first, you suffer a nasty shock as your sim module kicks out. This happens to hackers so often it has its own name: **dumpshock**. The Damage Value for dumpshock is 6S if you're in cold-sim and 6P if you're in hot-sim. Dumpshock is biofeedback damage, so you resist it with Willpower + Firewall. As if that weren't enough, you're also disoriented and take a -2 dice pool modifier on all of your actions for (10 - Willpower) minutes. Remember that if you're being dumped because your deck just got bricked, you don't have a functional Firewall attribute any more, so only use your Willpower.

Another danger in the Matrix is having your connection **link-locked**. This is when another persona or device sends keep-alive signals to your deck (or other device) that force it to cancel any attempt to leave the Matrix. If you're link-locked, you can't use the Switch Interface Mode, the Enter/Exit Host, or the Reboot actions on the device your persona is using (probably your deck). You can escape with a successful Jack Out (p. 240) action. Successfully jacking out usually means suffering dumpshock, but at least you're free. Any persona, be they agent, technomancer, or sprite, can be link-locked.

Usually, if you fall unconscious in VR, your commlink or deck automatically switches you to AR. If you're link-locked, you remain online and in VR. IC typically doesn't care whether its target is conscious, so it will probably keep attacking you. Spiders are a bit smarter about it but no less ruthless, and they have a lot of options when you're helpless and stuck in the Matrix. Either way, it's nasty, since you can't defend against actions when you're unconscious.

USER MODES

When you interact with the Matrix, you can do it in one of three modes. In augmented reality, or AR mode, you deal with reality directly, and you use your meat body to interact with the Matrix through AR overlays. In virtual reality, or VR mode, your body goes limp and your only sensory input comes from the Matrix. Basic VR mode is cold-sim, meaning you interact with the Matrix primarily through sight and sound. In hot-sim VR mode, your have the full Matrix experience, involving all of your senses as well as your emotions. You can perform Matrix actions in any of the three modes.

AUGMENTED REALITY

As we've described, AR is normal living in physical space with an AR heads-up display. You can see the Matrix if you like, either by creating a virtual window or display screen and viewing it like a camera, or by overlaying device and host information on your normal vision. Your persona can go anywhere in the Matrix using this view. You can even enter hosts, although your icon will appear jerky and slow compared to a VR user in the same node.

When in AR, you use your normal Initiative and Initiative Dice. You do not take biofeedback damage, like from the attack of Black IC. If your attention is really focused on your AR display and not your surroundings, your gamemaster may impose a -2 dice pool penalty on any Perception tests you make to notice things going on around you in physical space.

COLD-SIM VIRTUAL REALITY

In cold-sim VR, you're meshed with the Matrix through simsense filters. This means your brain is protected from dangerous signals, but it makes things a bit slower for you because all data is analyzed by your sim module before it reaches you. Your body relaxes and your meat senses are blocked, as though your body were asleep. You see the Matrix as though you were really there, soaring among the icons.

In cold-sim VR, you use your Data Processing + Intuition as your Initiative, and you get +3D6 Initiative Dice (remember that any enhancements or bonuses cannot take you past the maximum of 5D6 Initiative Dice). Whenever you take biofeedback damage, it is Stun damage.

HOT-SIM VIRTUAL REALITY

Hot-sim VR is like cold-sim VR, only the filters are off. You are flooded with simsense signals that can even affect your limbic system, so you can not only see, hear, and touch the Matrix, but you can *feel* it. Hot-sim uses the same simsense signals as better-than-life chips, which makes it dangerous and even addictive (p. 413), but you can't get a closer, more intuitive connection with the Matrix.

When you are in hot-sim VR mode, you use your Data Processing + Intuition as your Initiative and you get +4D6 Initiative Dice (remember that any enhancements or bonuses cannot take you past the maximum of 5D6 Initiative Dice). You receive a +2 dice pool bonus to all Matrix actions, and you take biofeedback damage as Physical damage.

MAKING CONNECTIONS

The Matrix is a different environment, one that runs parallel with the real world while being deeply connected to it. When you're flying through the virtual night, there are some things that work a bit differently than they would if you were flying through the physical night. Aside from gravity, that is.

NOISE

Noise is the static on the wireless Matrix. There are a lot of things that can mess with your signal, like nearby electronics, natural and artificial dampening, and even cosmic background radiation. It may seem as if traffic in the Matrix is instantaneous, but ask anyone who has played an online game with someone a few continents away—there is a noticeable delay compared to playing someone next door. When decisions are being made in the blink of an eye, every speed difference matters. The farther you are away from an icon in real life, the harder it is to communicate with it, whether your intentions are harmful or benign. Noise can be reduced with **noise reduction**, which can be provided by a few different pieces of hardware and software (see **Street Gear**, p. 416).

The most common source of noise is distance from your target, but there are other causes, as listed on the table. There are also **spam zones** and **static zones** to deal with. A spam zone has so much traffic (often commercial in nature) that everything gets processed slower. Static zones are areas with either a lot of electromagnetic blockage (like an underground tunnel, labyrinth of sewers, or ruins of a steel office building) or far away from civilization (the middle of a desert, the north pole, adrift in the Pacific, etc.).

To figure out how noise is affecting you, start with the noise level from real-world distance to your target and add the noise level from any other applicable situations, then subtract any noise reduction you are using. Any positive noise level you have left over is a negative

USER MODES TABLE

USER MODE	INITIATIVE	INITIATIVE DICE	NOTES
Augmented Reality	Physical Initiative	Physical Initiative Dice	can be distracting
Cold-Sim	Data Processing + Intuition	3D6	
Hot-Sim	Data Processing + Intuition	4D6	+2 dice pool bonus to Matrix actions

dice pool modifier to your actions. Noise never applies to defense or resistance tests.

ILLEGAL ACTIONS

Some Matrix actions are illegal, making them more risky than legal actions. The Matrix was built with security in mind, but of course they couldn't make it hacker-proof. The list of illegal actions is pretty simple: all Attack and Sleaze actions are illegal. The risks that go with them depend on just what you're trying to do.

If you fail an Attack action, your target's security software rejects your code, corrupting it and sending it back where it came from. If it was normal data, then your system could check it for errors, but in this case it's some pretty vicious stuff designed to avoid Firewalls. For every net hit the target got on its defense test, you take 1 box of Matrix damage, which you can't resist.

If you fail a Sleaze action, the target's Firewall software detects the intrusion and places a mark on you. A device immediately informs its owner, a host launches IC. If the target already has three marks on you, it doesn't get another, but it still does the informing and launching.

OVERWATCH SCORE AND CONVERGENCE

The greatest ninjas in the world can't walk through the desert without moving some sand, and the best hackers in the world can't hack the Matrix without leaving tiny clues to their passing. GOD and the demiGODs are on the lookout for these kinds of clues, but luckily the Matrix is a really big place, with plenty of places to hide. They're good, though, and they'll get you eventually. The more hacking you do, the easier you are to find.

NOISE AND MATRIX USE

PHYSICAL DISTANCE TO TARGET	NOISE LEVEL
Directly connected (any distance)	0
Up to 100 meters	0
101-1,000 meters (1 km)	1
1,001-10,000 meters (10 km)	3
10,001-100,000 meters (100 km)	5
Greater than 100 km	8

SITUATION	NOISE LEVEL
Dense foliage	1 per 5 meters
Faraday cage	no signal, action blocked
Fresh water	1 per 10 cm
Jamming	1 per hit on Jam Signals actions
Metal-laced earth or wall	1 per 5 meters
Salt water	1 per centimeter
Spam zone or static zone	Rating
Wireless negation (e.g., wallpaper or paint)	Rating

SPAM AND STATIC ZONES

SPAM ZONE	STATIC ZONE	NOISE RATING
City downtown	Abandoned building	1
Sprawl downtown	Abandoned neighborhood, barrens	2
Major event or advertising blitz	Rural area, abandoned underground area, heavy rain or snow	3
Commercial area in a city	Wilderness, severe storm	4
Commercial area in a sprawl	Remote place with satellite access only	5
Massive gathering or during widespread emergency	Remote, enclosed place (cave, desert ruin)	6

EXAMPLE

Tesseract needs to pick up a piece of data a Renraku sarariman has on his commlink, and he decides to go for a smash-and-grab. The target isn't running silent, so he can see the file he wants, but it's protected. He'll need to crack the protection before he copies it, and both actions need a mark on the file. He starts with a Brute Force action on the file (which uses its owner's ratings), getting four hits to the target's two. He succeeds and gets a mark on the file, but he also gets an Overwatch Score of two since the file's owner got two hits. Next he attempts a Crack File action, again rolling four hits. This time, the sarariman and his commlink gets three hits. Tesseract has succeeded again, breaking the protection, but thanks to the three hits by the opposition his OS jumps from two to five. Now all he needs to do is copy the file, but since that's a Data Processing action, he doesn't need to worry about his OS going up again before he can make his escape with the paydata.

When you start using the Matrix after a fresh boot, you're as pure and innocent as the driven snow (at least as far as the demiGODs are concerned). The moment you perform an illegal action (Attack or Sleaze), you get an **Overwatch Score,** or OS, that your gamemaster uses to track how much evidence you've been leaving in your wake. When you perform an Attack or Sleaze action, your OS increases by the number of hits the target gets on its defense test.

The Overwatch Score also increases as time goes by. If the demiGODs have time to analyze your activities, they'll notice traces of your passing and will start to get closer and closer. Every fifteen minutes after you first start tallying an OS, it increases by another 2D6 (rolled by the gamemaster in secret).

When your Overwatch Score hits 40, the jig is up. The nastiness that follows is called **convergence**. The grid's demiGOD converges on your trail, and then the fun begins. First, they hit you for 12 DV Matrix damage, which you resist normally. Then they force your persona to reboot, erasing all of your marks and dumping you from the Matrix (causing dumpshock if you were in VR at the time). As if that wasn't enough, they also report your physical location to the owner of the grid you were just using and the host you were in (if you were in a host), so you might have to deal with some real-life security forces coming to track your ass down.

Your gamemaster keeps your Overwatch Score a secret from you. You can use the Check Overwatch Score action or the Baby Monitor program to keep tabs on your OS. You could just wing it, too, if you've got a good memory (and the gamemaster is nice enough to tell you how many hits your targets get. Which, honestly, she shouldn't be, but we don't control everything).

Of course, G-men, security spiders, IC, and other users who are officially sanctioned by GOD never rack up an Overwatch Score, even if they're really misbehaving. Such is life on the Matrix. And in the meat world, too, come to think about it. Convergence does something slightly different in hosts (**Host Convergence**, p. 247), but once you poke your head out the demiGOD hammer will fall.

DIRECT CONNECTIONS

Devices have a **universal data connector,** which is the global standard for connecting devices together for power and data exchange. If you have a cable, you can connect to the device directly. Cyberdecks and datajacks come with a meter of built-in retractable microfilament data cable, or you can always buy a cable for about five nuyen per meter (some devices, especially those installed in buildings, are connected by cables to mitigate noise). When you use a direct connection, you ignore all noise modifiers and modifiers due to being on different grids or the public grid. It's just you and the device.

Some devices don't have wireless capability. Usually this is because the person who bought the device couldn't afford one that was less than ten years old, or because they thought they'd be more secure without wireless. These devices are called **throwbacks.** Throwbacks can't be accessed by wireless connection, so they can't be controlled remotely or get a wireless bonus for being connected to the Matrix. They still have universal data connectors, so you can connect to them (and hack them) by jacking in directly.

HOST: NEO-TOKYO CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

Have you ever wanted to visit Neo-Tokyo but couldn't afford the sub-orbital flight? You can have the N-T experience in the comfort of your own home! The Neo-Tokyo's Convention and Visitors Bureau host features a full-scale rendered model of Neo-Tokyo's shopping district, complete with their FeelReal™ sensory and physics engine, along with real-time updates of weather, shops, events, and even pedestrian traffic.

For a modest subscription fee, you can appear in augmented reality alongside the people who are physically there! You can even stroll through the stores to shop, interacting with the actual shopkeepers. You will receive a digital copy of everything you purchase to use in VR while you wait for the physical item to be shipped to you.

PANS AND WANS

If you want extra protection for some of your devices, you can **slave** them to your commlink or deck. Your commlink (or deck) can handle up to (Device Rating x 3) slaved devices, becoming the **master** device in that particular relationship. The group consisting of your slaved devices plus your master commlink or deck is called a **personal area network**, or PAN.

Slaving gives a weaker device some added protection. Whenever a slaved device is called on to make a defense test, it uses either its own or its master's rating for each rating in the test. For example, if your slaved smartgun is the target of a hacker's Brute Force action, it would use your Willpower or its Device Rating, and its Firewall or your commlink's, whichever is higher in each instance. If a slaved device is under attack via a direct connection (as through a universal data connector), however, it cannot use its master's ratings to defend itself.

There are risks to slaving devices. Because of the tight connections between the devices, if you get a mark on a slave you also get a mark on the master. This happens even if the slave was marked through a direct connection, so be careful about who you give your slaved devices to. This doesn't work both ways; if you fail a Sleaze action against a slaved device, only the device's owner gets the mark on you, not the master too.

There are also **wide area networks**, or WANs, with multiple devices slaved to a host. A host can have a practically unlimited number of devices slaved to it, but because of the direct connection hack you rarely see more devices than can be protected physically. If you are in a host that has a WAN, you are considered directly connected to all devices in the WAN.

Only devices can be slaves, masters, or part of a PAN. In a WAN, the slaves must be devices, and the master must be a host.

GRIDS

You need a grid to access the Matrix. The grid you're on changes the look of the Matrix slightly, and it also can affect your interactions with other icons. There are three kinds of grids in the Matrix: the public grid, local grids, and global grids.

GRIDS ON A RUN

On a typical shadowrun, you'll only be dealing with one or two grids, aside from the public one. Most likely, there will be the one you're typically on (probably your local or public grid) and the one that your targets are on. It's usually fairly obvious which grid your objectives are using. All the devices and people in a Shiawase facility will be using the Shiawase global grid, for example, while a thrill gang is probably on the public grid, and local law enforcement on the local grid.

EXAMPLE

Tesseract wants to protect Crunch's HK-227 from any hacking attacks. Its Device Rating and Firewall ratings are both 2, and Crunch isn't exactly the sharpest bulb in the ocean, which makes for a poor dice pool on defense. If a competent hacker comes along, Crunch is going to be in trouble. To keep him safe, Tesseract slaves the gun to his deck. He has his Firewall set at 4, and his Willpower is 5, meaning the weapon is protected by 9 dice. Now an enemy hacker is going to have trouble landing a serious blow, at least before Crunch does.

Different grids have different demiGODs that monitor traffic and keep an eye out for security, which occasionally causes a bit of lag across grids. When you're attempting a Matrix action against a target on another grid, you take a –2 dice pool penalty. If you want to avoid this penalty, you'll have to hop to the target's grid. If you have access to the grid you want, you can just use a Grid-Hop; otherwise you'll have to get your access by the Brute Force or Hack on the Fly Matrix actions (p. 237). Note that this penalty doesn't apply when you're inside a host; it's only imposed when you're out on a grid.

EXAMPLE

Pistons and /dev/grrl are on the public grid during a big run against NeoNET. On their way into the corp's offices with the rest of their team, they analyze some of the building's devices and note that, as they suspected, the building is on NeoNET's global grid. They could stay on the public grid, but that would cause a –2 dice pool penalty when targeting devices across grids (not to mention the public grid penalty of –2), so they agree to hop grids. /dev/grrl has access to that grid through her lifestyle, so she simply Grid-Hops and is now on the NeoNET grid. Pistons doesn't have any grid subscriptions, so she uses Hack on the Fly to make the hop, with a –2 dice pool penalty for being on the public grid.

THE PUBLIC GRID

The public grid is the Matrix's Barrens. It provides the world with just enough access to let the corporations claim that the Matrix is still free. Data traffic from paid global and local grids is given priority over information flowing to and from the public grid, so connection

DEVICE RATINGS

DEVICE TYPE	DEVICE RATING	EXAMPLES
Simple	1	General appliances, public terminals, entertainment systems
Average	2	Standard personal electronics, basic cyberware, vehicles, drones, weapons, residential security devices
Smart	3	Security vehicles, alphaware, corporate security devices
Advanced	4	High-end devices, betaware, military vehicles and security devices
Cutting Edge	5	Deltaware, credsticks, black-ops vehicles and security devices
Bleeding Edge	6	Billion-nuyen experimental devices, space craft

MATRIX SPOTTING TABLE

TARGET IS...	AND IS... NOT RUNNING SILENT	AND IS... RUNNING SILENT
Within 100 meters	Automatic	
Outside 100 meters	Simple Computer + Intuition [Data Processing]	Opposed Computer + Intuition [Data Processing] v. Logic + Sleaze Test
A host	automatic	

times are slow and unreliable. As a result, all Matrix actions are performed at a -2 dice pool penalty when you're using the public grid, even in a host.

LOCAL GRIDS

Local grids are available within a specifically defined physical area, such as a sprawl or county. You can only access a local grid if you're accessing it from the service area, usually the geographic area with which it is associated. For example, the Emerald City local grid is only accessible as long as you're in Seattle. Outside the sprawl, the Salish-Shidhe ChinookNet becomes the local grid. You can still access things on the Emerald City grid, but you're now working across grids. Each local grid is usually provided by a AAA or AA megacorp, though the advertising is a bit more muted than you'd find on the more commercial global grids.

GLOBAL GRIDS

There are ten publicly known global grids, one for each of the Big Ten megacorporations. As you'd guess by the name, global grids are accessible all over the world, even in orbit out to as far as two thousand kilometers from the surface of the Earth. These grids are full of advertising and marketing. Each has its own demiGOD, and those groups share security information and Overwatch Score data freely. The megas don't agree on much, but they all hate hackers.

DEVICES AND PERSONAS

Devices and personas are the movers and shakers in the Matrix. They're the only icons that actually do things (except hosts, which do things internally, but let's stay focused). The difference between the two is that devices usually do things in the real world, while personas do their thing in the Matrix.

DEVICES

A device in the Matrix is any wireless device in the real world. Toasters, power tools, vehicles, firearms, fire hydrants, street lights, ear phones, sales and inventory tags, doors and locks, commlinks, pet collars, office equipment, snow blowers, thermostats, drones ... if it's big enough for a microchip, it's big enough to house enough computing power to be a device. And if it's a device, it's in the Matrix.

Devices have a smaller-than-person-sized icon in the Matrix. They also have three ratings: a Device Rating and two of the Matrix attributes, Data Processing and Firewall. For most devices, the Matrix attributes are the same as the Device Rating.

When is a device not a device? When it's a persona!

PERSONA

Personas are the "people" of the Matrix. Some personas are actually people, users and hackers who are connected to and using the Matrix. When a person uses a device to connect to the Matrix, the device's icon is subsumed by the persona's icon, so it's basically gone from the Matrix until the persona jacks out. You can only run one persona at a time; switching requires you to reboot both the device you're currently on and the device to which you want to shift your persona.

Some personas are agents, performing tasks on behalf of their owners. Agents running alone on a device replace the device icon the same way a living user does. If you're running an agent along with your persona, it appears with its own separate persona, even though you're using the same device.

Each IC program has its own persona. IC programs are not connected to devices because they're only found in hosts (thankfully).

Technomancers have a living persona not attached to any device. A technomancer's persona exists in the Matrix as long as they're awake, unless they deliberately jack out. When a technomancer compiles a sprite, the sprite has its own persona, too.

MATRIX PERCEPTION

The Matrix has a lot of stuff in it. Cars, blenders, light switches, advertising RFIDs, hosts, and everything wireless and/or electronic. You need to be able to find your target in the galaxy of icons before you can start affecting it; finding an icon this way is called **spotting** it. Lucky for you, the Matrix is very helpful in finding things for you.

You can automatically spot the icons of devices that are not running silent within 100 meters of your physical location. No matter where you are in the Matrix, your commlink or deck (or your living persona) only has its own antenna for wireless signals, so this distance is measured from your physical location no matter where you are in the Matrix. Beyond this distance, you need to make a Matrix Perception Test (p. 241) to find a specific icon.

For all intents and purposes, there is no "physical" distance to any host in the Matrix. You can always spot a host from anywhere on the planet without a test, assuming the host isn't running silent.

You can always keep track of your marks, so you can spot an icon you have a mark on without a test, no matter the distance.

SPOTTING DURATION

Once you've spotted an icon in the Matrix, you continue to spot it even if it initiates silent running. There are two ways you can lose an icon. If the icon successfully uses a Hide action against you, you lose it and need to try to spot it again. If the target reboots or jacks out, you also lose the icon.

MATRIX PERCEPTION

When you take a Matrix Perception action, each hit can reveal one piece of information you ask of your gamemaster. Here's a list of some of the things Matrix Perception can tell you. It's not an exhaustive list, but it should give you a pretty good idea about how to use Matrix Perception:

- Spot a target icon you're looking for.
- The most recent edit date of a file.
- The number of boxes of Matrix damage on the target's Condition Monitor.
- The presence of a data bomb on a file.
- The programs being run by a persona.
- The target's device rating.
- The target's commode.
- The rating of one of the target's Matrix attributes.
- The type of icon (host, persona, device, file), if it is using a non-standard (or even illegal) look.
- Whether a file is protected, and at what rating.
- The grid a persona, device, or host is using.
- If you're out on the grid, whether there is an icon running silent within 100 meters.
- If you're in a host, whether there is an icon running silent in the host.
- If you know at least one feature of an icon running silent, you can spot the icon (Running Silent, below).
- The last Matrix action an icon performed, and when.
- The marks on an icon, but not their owners.

RUNNING SILENT

You can switch your commlink, deck, other device, or persona (including your living persona, technomancers) to silent running. This reduces your traffic to and from the Matrix, but it doesn't stop it entirely. Running silent makes it easier to avoid detection, but harder to use the Matrix as a whole.

Switching to silent running is a Simple Action. Running silent imposes a -2 dice pool modifier to all of your Matrix actions due to the processing power needed to cover your tracks.

If you're trying to find an icon that's running silent (or if you're running silent and someone's looking for you), the first thing you need to do is have some idea that a hidden icon is out there. You can do this with a hit from a Matrix Perception Test; asking if there are icons running silent in the vicinity (either in the same host or within 100 meters) can be a piece of information you learn with a hit.

Once you know a silent running icon is in the vicinity, the next step is to actually find it. This is done through an Opposed Computer + Intuition [Data Processing] v.

Logic + Sleaze Test. If you get more hits, you perceive the icon as normal; on a tie or more hits by the defender, it stays hidden and out of reach.

Note that if there are multiple silent running icons in the vicinity, you have to pick randomly which one you're going to look at through the Opposed Test.

Marks can't run silent because they're already pretty hidden, but all other Matrix objects can be switched to silent running by their owners.

NOTICING HACKERS

An icon or host might detect you if you perform an Attack or Sleaze action on it. The exact way they can detect you depends on what you're doing to it.

If you succeed with an Attack action, your target becomes aware that it is under attack by another icon, but it doesn't automatically spot you. It will most likely actively search for you on its next action, although it will almost always alert its owner to the attack and (if it's a host) launch IC, depending on the owner's preferences and the gamemaster's judgment. If you fail with an Attack action, you are not noticed, because you failed to affect your opponent (though note the damage effects of rejected code coming back to you, **Illegal Actions**, p. 231).

On the other hand, if you succeed in a Sleaze action, you do not increase your visibility. If you fail a Sleaze action, however, your target immediately gets one free mark on you (or its owner does if your target is a device). This means it spots you right away, along with the whole owner-alerting and IC-launching thing.

RECOGNITION KEYS

Want to get into a club where you've already paid the cover charge? Show the guy at the door the stamp on the back of your hand. Want to get into a foreign country? Show the border guards the visa stamp on your virtual passport.

The Matrix works the same way. If you can show a device or host or whatever that you have the right mark, you can go where you want to go. In Matrix lingo, "mark" is an acronym for **Matrix authentication recognition key**, which is part of the protocol that devices, personas, files, grids, hosts, and so on uses to identify legitimate users. Only personas may mark icons.

When you're hacking things, putting your mark on it encourages that thing to recognize you as legit. It's no guarantee—just as a sharp-eyed border guard can nail your visa for being fake, and hosts are sometimes not fooled by your hacked mark—but the more marks you get on something in the Matrix, the more likely it is that you'll be accepted as a viable user, or even an administrator. Still, security-minded Matrix operators will often have agents or even spiders constantly using Matrix Perception to look for unauthorized marks on sensitive icons (and like security guards in the meat world, these are the people who tend to get taken out first when shadowrunners come calling).

There are three ways to get a mark on an icon. The first is the legitimate way: the icon invites you to add a mark. For example, when you pay the cover to get into the host of Dante's Inferno, the host sends you an invite to mark it so you can enter and join the party. The other two ways are by hacking, both Matrix actions: Brute Force (the loud way) or Hack on the Fly (the sneaky way).

In the Matrix, whether in AR or VR, putting a mark on something is usually a very literal action. You approach the icon of your target and slap your personalized mark on the thing. Most passers-by won't see your mark; it takes a Matrix Perception Test to see that kind of detail. When you put a mark on something, your mark appears on the target icon. Your mark is only visible to you (without the aforementioned Matrix Perception Test). You can choose its look, as long as it meshes with your own persona icon (per Matrix protocols). For example, if your icon is a house cat, your mark might look like a small paw print. If you appear as a ninja in the Matrix, your mark might look like a shuriken buried into your target.

You can put multiple marks on a single icon, up to a maximum of three (unless you're an owner; see below). Different Matrix actions require different numbers of marks on your target.

Marks only last a single Matrix session and are deleted when you reboot. This is rarely an issue for most devices because they almost never need to reboot, and when they do the hosts and other services usually have a standing offer, so re-marking them takes seconds. Hackers, by contrast, reboot regularly to avoid detection by GOD and the demiGODs, and they don't exactly get permission to place most of their marks. If the demiGODs converge on a hacker (perish the thought), they erase all of the hacker's marks in the process.

Your marks are specific and connected to your persona and whatever you've marked, so you can't just give them out for others to place or transfer them to other people. You can give other personas permission to mark devices you own with the Invite Mark action (p. 240).

OWNERS

Every device, persona, host, and file has an **owner.** This is a special relationship that offers special privileges. Each Matrix object can only have one owner, but you can own as many Matrix objects as you like. The owner of a device, host, persona, or file can always spot it in the Matrix. For all intents and purposes, owning an icon is the same as having four marks on it.

Owning a device and being its owner aren't necessarily the same thing, although they usually go together. Ownership, at least in the Matrix, is something that is registered with both the device (or other icons) and the grids, so it's a bit more involved than just putting a "Property of [blank]" sticker on it. When a commlink is

at the store or in a warehouse, the commlink's owner is its manufacturer (although sometimes stores get ownership of their goods before the buyer does). When you buy that commlink, the store or manufacturer transfers ownership to you.

Corporations and governments use this registration system to keep track of their equipment. A security guard's weapon might be in her holster, but its owner is the corp that employs her. This makes it relatively simple to track down thieves, deserters, and looters—at least, the ones who can't hack what they steal.

The owner of an icon can intentionally transfer ownership to another persona in a process that takes about a minute. If you steal a smartgun without transferring the ownership, the gun will still behave as though its owner is the guy you stole it from (which can lead to complications if the owner comes looking for it). That means changing ownership is a high-priority action any time you steal a wireless-enabled item. You can illegally change a device's owner with a Hardware toolkit and an Extended Hardware + Logic [Mental] (24, 1 hour) test. A glitch on that test results in the item sending a report to the authorities.

Changing ownership of a file is somewhat easier. Your best bet is to use Edit File to copy it (the copy's owner is you) and then delete the original, again with the Edit File action.

Note that you can't change the owner of a persona or a host. So sorry, chummer—you can't steal an entire Stuffer Shack with a quick hack.

MATRIX ACTIONS

As you've no doubt guessed from the name, Matrix actions are only available in the Matrix. That's not to say that they're the only actions available in the Matrix. Matrix actions are special because certain rules apply to them, like noise and the Overwatch Score.

This section is a list of Matrix actions. This list covers a lot of the rules for handling what you can do in the digital world, but of course they're not the only things you can do in the Matrix. If you want to try something that isn't handled by these rules, like tweaking your icon to imitate a fashion trend or creating a distracting VR display out of datastreams, your gamemaster will let you know what kind of test you should attempt.

When a defense test calls for a Mental attribute, use the owner's rating. Even if she isn't currently defending or even interacting with the device, her previous interactions and settings affect the defense test. If a device is completely unattended, the Device Rating stands in for any Mental attributes an icon needs but doesn't have. For example, a device that an owner sets and forgets, like a door lock, uses its Device Rating in place of Intuition as part of the defense pool against a Control Device action.

BRUTE FORCE
(COMPLEX ACTION)

Marks Required: none
Test: Cybercombat + Logic [Attack] v. Willpower + Firewall

You can use this action to mark a target without obtaining the normal permissions you need. This is the action for hackers emphasizing their Attack over their Sleaze, making it related to Hack on the Fly.

If you succeed in this action, you place one mark on it. You can have up to a maximum of three marks per icon. If you wish, you may also inflict 1 DV of Matrix damage to the target for every two full net hits, if the target can take Matrix damage, which is resisted with the target's Device Rating + Firewall.

Before rolling, you can declare that you are trying to place more than one mark. If you try for two marks in one shot, you take a -4 dice pool penalty on the attempt. If you try for three marks in a single swipe, you take a -10 dice pool penalty.

You can also use this action to hop to a grid for which you don't have legitimate access. The defense dice pool in this case is 4 dice for a local grid or 6 dice for a global grid. If you succeed, instead of putting a mark on the grid, you hop to that grid immediately. Using Brute Force to hop grids successfully doesn't alert the grid or its demiGOD the way most successful Attack actions do.

CHANGE ICON
(SIMPLE ACTION)

Marks Required: Owner
Test: none (Data Processing action)

You change the target's icon to one that you have a copy of or have designed yourself. Changing an icon doesn't change the results of a Matrix Perception action, but might fool personas who don't take the time to inspect your new look. You can target your own icon, if you like.

CHECK OVERWATCH SCORE
(SIMPLE ACTION)

Marks Required: none
Test: Electronic Warfare + Logic [Sleaze] v. 6 dice

You find out how close the grid is to converging on you. Checking the OS is a Sleaze action, so the defense against it will add to your OS. If you succeed, the gamemaster tells you what your OS was when you started the action, then adds the hits from the defending dice pool.

CONTROL DEVICE
(VARIABLE ACTION)

Marks Required: varies
Test: (as action) [Data Processing (or special)] v. (as action) or Electronic Warfare + Intuition [Sleaze] v. Intuition + Firewall

You perform an action through a device you control (or at least control sufficiently), using your commlink or deck like a remote control or video-game controller. The dice pool of any test you make using this action uses the rating of the appropriate skill and attribute you would use if you were performing the action normally. For example, firing a drone-mounted weapon at a target requires a Gunnery + Agility test, and using a remote underwater welder calls for a Nautical Mechanic + Logic test. All actions you take while controlling a device use either the normal limit for that action or your Data Processing rating, whichever is lower. If there is no test associated with the action you want the device to perform (such as unlocking a maglock or ejecting a clip from a pistol), you must succeed in an Electronic Warfare + Intuition [Sleaze] v. Intuition + Firewall test to perform the action.

You can use this action to control multiple devices at once. If you are the owner of all devices being commanded and they are all being commanded to do exactly the same thing, taking this action costs nothing extra. Otherwise, you must split your dice pool into a number of groups equal to the number of devices you want to control with a single action.

The type of action this is (i.e., Free, Simple, Standard, and Complex) is the same as the type of action attempted with the device, and it requires 1 mark for Free Actions, 2 marks for Simple Actions, and 3 marks for Standard or Complex Actions.

This action is a Sleaze action whenever you use your Sleaze as a limit in the test, which incurs the same risk of Overwatch Score and consequences of failure as all Sleaze actions.

CRACK FILE
(COMPLEX ACTION)

Marks Required: 1
Test: Hacking + Logic [Attack] v. Protection Rating x 2

You remove the protection from a file, making it readable. This action doesn't need to be performed on a file that isn't protected, of course.

CRASH PROGRAM
(COMPLEX ACTION)

Marks Required: 1
Test: Cybercombat + Logic [Attack] v. Intuition + Firewall

You overload part of your target's memory and scramble one of its running programs. You need to specify which program you're trying to crash; you can learn what your target is running either with a Matrix Perception action or by observing the program in action. If you succeed, the program is scrambled: it ends and cannot be restarted until the device it was running on is rebooted.

DATA SPIKE
(COMPLEX ACTION)

Marks Required: none
Test: Cybercombat + Logic [Attack] v. Intuition + Firewall

You send harmful instructions to a persona or device, causing Matrix damage to the target. Your attack has a Damage Value equal to your Attack rating, with one additional box of damage per net hit, and two additional boxes of damage for each mark you have on the target. This damage is Matrix damage (p. 228), resisted with the target's Device Rating + Firewall.

DISARM DATA BOMB
(COMPLEX ACTION)

Marks Required: none
Test: Software + Intuition [Firewall] v. Data Bomb Rating x 2

You attempt to disarm a Data Bomb that you have detected (usually as the result of a Matrix Perception action). If you score any net hits, the Data Bomb is removed and deleted. If not, the Data Bomb activates, causing its damage and possibly destroying any file to which it was attached (assuming it was set to destroy the file).

EDIT FILE
(COMPLEX ACTION)

Marks Required: 1
Test: Computer + Logic [Data Processing] v. Intuition + Firewall

Edit File allows you to create, change, copy, delete, or protect any kind of file. The defender against this test is either the host holding the file or the owner of the file (if it's not on a host). Each action is enough to alter one detail of a file—a short paragraph of text, a single detail of an image, or two or three seconds of video or audio (you and your gamemaster can work out what exactly "one detail" means). Your gamemaster may impose penalties on the test if your edit is particularly intricate or tricky. If you want to perform a continuous edit, such as removing your teammates from a video feed, you need to perform this action once per Combat Turn for as long as you want to keep the edit going.

If you use this action to copy a file, you are the new file's owner. If the file you want to copy has protection on it, this action automatically fails. If the file has a Data Bomb, the Data Bomb goes off on you (so try to remember to scan files before you open them).

You can also use this action to set protection on a file if you're its owner. To protect a file, make a Simple Computer + Logic [Data Processing] test. The number of hits you get becomes the rating of the protected file. A protected file cannot be read, changed, deleted, or copied until its protection is broken.

ENTER/EXIT HOST
(COMPLEX ACTION)

Marks Required: 1
Test: n/a

You enter a host that you have a mark on and your icon appears there, or you leave a host you're already in. There is no test for this action: a host allows anyone to enter if they've got a mark, and anyone inside can exit. The host might not be so welcoming once you're inside, of course, and some IC has the ability to keep you trapped in a host until you can break out.

When you leave a host, you return to the grid from which you entered.

ERASE MARK
(COMPLEX ACTION)

Marks Required: special
Test: Computer + Logic [Attack] v. Willpower + Firewall

You eradicate a mark that has been placed on your persona or on another icon. To perform this action, you need three marks on the icon from which you are erasing a mark. You do not, however, need a mark on the icon that placed the mark in the first place. You can try to erase two marks in the same action at a -4 dice pool penalty, and three marks in one go at a -10 dice pool penalty; if you go for more than one mark, all of the marks must be on the same icon and from the same icon. You can't use this action to change the target's owner.

For example, an IC program has marked both you and your buddy. You roll your Computer + Logic (with your Attack program rating as the limit), opposed by the IC's rating (standing in for Willpower) + Firewall to erase its mark on your icon. You need three marks on your buddy's icon to erase the IC's marks on him, but he isn't the sharing type, so he's on his own for now.

ERASE MATRIX SIGNATURE
(COMPLEX ACTION)

Marks Required: none
Test: Computer + Resonance [Attack] v. (Signature Rating) x 2

You eradicate a Matrix signature that has been left by a Resonance being, such as a technomancer or a sprite. If successful, the signature dissipates. You need to have a Resonance rating to attempt this action; unlike other actions that need Resonance, this one's a real Matrix Action, and an Attack one to boot, so you risk Matrix damage and Overwatch Score when you use it.

FORMAT DEVICE
(COMPLEX ACTION)

Marks Required: 3
Test: Computer + Logic [Sleaze] v. Willpower + Firewall

You rewrite the boot code for the device. The next time it would reboot, it instead shuts down for good, or until its software can be replaced (an Extended Software + Logic [Mental] (12, 1 hour) Test). A device that has been shut down in this fashion loses all of its wireless modifiers but can still be used as a normal mechanism (a door with a manual handle can be opened, a gun with a trigger can be fired, etc.) and cannot be accessed from the Matrix.

FULL MATRIX DEFENSE
(INTERRUPT ACTION)

Marks Required: Owner
Test: none (Firewall action)

This allows you to defend against Attack actions, and may be taken at any time. Whenever you make a defense test against a Matrix Action, add your Willpower to the dice pool (or add it again if it's already in there). When you take this action, your Initiative Score is reduced by 10, but the effects last for the rest of the Combat Turn.

GRID HOP
(COMPLEX ACTION)

Marks Required: none
Test: none (Data Processing action)

You hop to another grid—for example, you might jump from the public grid to Seattle's Emerald City local grid. To do this, you must have access to your destination grid. If you do not have access, you can use Brute Force or Hack on the Fly to hop to another grid illegally. If you're inside a host, you need to leave the host before you can hop to another grid.

HACK ON THE FLY
(COMPLEX ACTION)

Marks Required: none
Test: Hacking + Logic [Sleaze] v. Intuition + Firewall

You can use this action to mark a target without getting the normal permissions. This is the action for hackers emphasizing their Sleaze over their Attack, making it an analog to Brute Force.

When targeting an icon, you put one mark on it, up to a maximum of three marks per icon. Additionally, every two full net hits counts as one hit on a Matrix Perception Test, so you can get some info along with your mark.

Before rolling, you can declare that you are trying for more than one mark. If you try for two marks in one shot, you take a -4 dice pool penalty on the attempt. If you try for three marks in one go, you take a -10 dice pool penalty.

You can also use this action to hop to a grid for which you don't have legitimate access. The defense dice pool in this case is 4 dice for a local grid or 6 dice for a global grid. If you succeed, instead of putting a mark on the grid, you hop to that grid immediately. Using Hack on the Fly to hop grids unsuccessfully doesn't alert the grid or its demiGOD the way most unsuccessful Sleaze actions do.

HIDE
(COMPLEX ACTION)

Marks Required: 0
Test: Electronic Warfare + Intuition [Sleaze] v. Intuition + Data Processing

You'll probably be spotted by another icon, even if you're running silent. You can use this action to make a target lose you. If you succeed, the target stops spotting you and needs to perform a new Matrix Perception action against you if it wants to find you again. You can't hide from an icon that has a mark on you, so you'll need to clear those before you can try this action.

INVITE MARK
(SIMPLE ACTION)

Marks Required: Owner
Test: none (Data Processing action)

If you're the owner of a device, file, persona, host, or IC program, you can offer other icons the opportunity to put a mark on your device, file, etc. When you make the offer, you choose the number of marks allowed, their duration, and how long the offer stands. The invitee can then mark your icon with a Free Action. You may revoke your offer at any time before the mark is placed, but once another icon has a mark, you need to either use the Erase Mark action or reboot your device to remove it before the duration you chose expires.

JACK OUT
(SIMPLE ACTION)

Marks Required: Owner
Test: Hardware + Willpower [Firewall] v. Logic + Attack

This jacks you out of the Matrix and reboots the device you are using. You suffer dumpshock if you were in VR. The defense pool only applies if you've been link-locked (p. 229) by someone; the test is against the icon that locked your link. If more than one persona has you link-locked, you need to beat each of them individually: use a single roll and compare your hits to rolls from each opponent who had established a link-lock.

You can only jack out yourself. You can't dump other people except by beating them into submission through Matrix damage.

JAM SIGNALS
(COMPLEX ACTION)

Marks Required: Owner
Test: Electronic Warfare + Logic [Attack]

This action turns the wireless device you are using into a local jammer. As long as you do not use the device for any further Matrix actions, the device adds any hits you get on the test to the noise rating for all Matrix actions conducted by or targeting any devices within 100 meters. If you want selective jamming or directional jamming, buy a jammer—that's what they're for.

MATRIX SPOTTING TABLE

TARGET IS...	AND IS... NOT RUNNING SILENT	AND IS... RUNNING SILENT
Within 100 meters	Automatic	
Outside 100 meters	Simple Computer + Intuition [Data Processing]	Opposed Computer + Intuition [Data Processing] v. Logic + Sleaze Test
A host	automatic	

JUMP INTO RIGGED DEVICE
(COMPLEX ACTION)

Marks Required: 3
Test: Electronic Warfare + Logic [Data Processing] v. Willpower + Firewall

You jump into a device that has a rigger adaptation, usually a vehicle or a drone. There's a list of things you need to have in order to jump into a device: you have to have three marks on the device you want to jump into, you have to be in VR, the device you want to jump into has to have a rigger adaptation, and you have to have a control rig. If you are the device's owner, or the device's owner has given you permission to jump into the device, you don't need to make a test. In the Matrix, the icon of the device you jumped into becomes part of your persona.

If someone else is already jumped into the device, you cannot attempt this action until he or she vacates.

MATRIX PERCEPTION
(COMPLEX ACTION)

Marks Required: none
Test: Computer + Intuition [Data Processing] (v. Logic + Sleaze)

This versatile and important action is used both for finding icons in the Matrix and for analyzing Matrix objects. When you use this action to analyze a Matrix object or scan the vicinity for silent-running icons, you make a Simple Test and your hits determine how much info you get. For each net hit scored, you can ask for one piece of information about the object—this could be type, a rating, how many marks it has on it, any files it may be carrying, which grid it is using, whether any silent running icons are in the area, or any other pertinent Matrix information. You learn one fact per net hit. If you get a list of marks, you can only recognize marks you have seen before or marks left by personas that you have marks on yourself. Otherwise you only get a count.

If you're trying to spot an icon that is farther than 100 meters away, this is a Simple Test: the first hit lets you spot the target, and any additional hits can be used to get more information about it as mentioned above. If you're looking for an icon that is running silent (after you've determined that it's present), the test becomes an Opposed Test, with the target defending with Logic + Sleaze. Net hits are used just like you would for spotting distant targets, with the first one for spotting the target and the rest for analysis.

MATRIX SEARCH
(SPECIAL ACTION)

Action: special
Marks Required: n/a
Test: Simple Computer + Intuition [Data Processing]

You search the Matrix for information about a topic. The time it takes and the threshold of the test depend on the general availability of the information in question and the area being searched, respectively. Any hits above and beyond the threshold can be used to reduce the search time. Divide the base time by the net hits to determine the reduction. If you fail this test, you still spend the full base time looking.

Some information is protected and kept secret, stored in a host that is not publicly accessible. Finding this information usually requires you to find and enter the hosts in which the data is hidden. You can then make a Matrix Search within the host, using a base time of 1 minute (regardless of the kind of information you're

MATRIX SEARCH TABLE

INFORMATION IS:	THRESHOLD	TIME
General Knowledge or Public	1	1 minute
Limited Interest or Not Publicized	3	30 minutes
Hidden or Actively Hunted and Erased	6	12 hours
Protected or Secret	N/A	N/A

INFORMATION IS:	DICE POOL MODIFIER
Intricate or Specialized	–1
Obscure	–1
On another grid	–2

looking for). This only works if the information is at least occasionally accessed by the legitimate users of the host. If the information is archived, you'll need to dig deeper into the host for that information, a dangerous process that is detailed in the forthcoming Matrix sourcebook.

REBOOT DEVICE
(COMPLEX ACTION)

Marks Required: 3
Test: Computer + Logic [Data Processing] v. Willpower + Firewall

The device on which this action is performed shuts down and immediately reboots. The device comes back online at the end of the following Combat Turn. The device ceases electronic functions and disappears from the Matrix until its reboot time is over.

When you reboot the device your persona is on, your OS is reset to zero and all of your marks, as well as the ones others may have put on your icon, are erased. If you're in VR when you reboot, you suffer from dumpshock (see p. 229). When you come back online, your icon can be on any grid to which you have legitimate access, or the public grid if you have no other grid access.

When you perform this action, you can choose a delay of any amount of time between the time the device shuts down and the time it comes back online. Anyone with physical access to the device can override this delay by hitting the power button, which starts the boot process and brings the device online at the end of the following Combat Turn.

This action only works on devices. It doesn't work on hosts, living beings (like technomancers, although they can "reboot" themselves, p. 251), or Resonance constructs (like sprites), and the only persona it works on is your own. If you're the owner of the device you're rebooting, you don't have to make a test. You can't use this action on a device that is link-locked (p. 229).

SEND MESSAGE
(SIMPLE ACTION)

Marks Required: n/a (or 1)
Test: none (Data Processing action)

You send a text or audio message the length of a short sentence, an image, or a file via the Matrix to a user whose commcode you have. If you're using the Matrix through a DNI, even if you're in AR, you can send longer and more complicated messages, about a paragraph worth of text. You can also use this action to open a live feed to one or more recipients, using any digital recording devices you have.

SET DATA BOMB
(COMPLEX ACTION)

Marks Required: 1
Test: Software + Logic [Sleaze] v. (Device Rating x 2)

You set a Data Bomb in a file. When you do, choose the rating of the Data Bomb, up to the net hits on your test. You also need to choose whether or not the Data Bomb will delete the file to which it is attached when activated, and you need to program the passcode required to deactivate it. A file can only have one Data Bomb on it at a time.

The Data Bomb is triggered when someone attempts to read, edit, copy, protect, delete, or put another Data Bomb on the file without using the already-in-place Data Bomb's passcode. When a Data Bomb goes off, it causes (Rating)D6 Matrix Damage (resisted normally) to the icon that tripped it, deletes the file (if it was set that way), and then is itself deleted. If the passcode is used, the Data Bomb doesn't activate. Instead, it remains attached to the file, waiting for the next guy.

A Data Bomb can be detected using Matrix Perception. If it's detected, it can be defused with the Disarm Data Bomb action; a disarmed Data Bomb is deleted. Damn.

SNOOP
(COMPLEX ACTION)

Marks Required: 1
Test: Electronic Warfare + Intuition [Sleaze] v. Logic + Firewall

This action lets you intercept Matrix traffic sent to and from your target for as long as you have the target marked. You can listen to, view, or read this data live, or you can save it for later playback/viewing if you have something to store it on (your deck will do).

SPOOF COMMAND
(COMPLEX ACTION)

Marks Required: 1 (see description)
Test: Hacking + Intuition [Sleaze] v. Logic + Firewall

You spoof a device's owner's identity, making the device think that your command is a legitimate one from its owner. You need one mark on the icon you are imitating; you do not need a mark on the target. The opposing dice roll is still based on the target, though. This trick only works on devices and agents, not IC, sprites, hosts, personas, or any other icons.

USES OF SNOOP

Snooping is often used for more than just eavesdropping. If your target makes a commcall, you can note the person they called and try to find them online with a Matrix Perception action; if they're within 100 meters, you spot them right away (if they're not running silent; if they are, then it's back to the Matrix Perception Test).

SWITCH INTERFACE MODE
(SIMPLE ACTION)

Marks Required: Owner
Test: none (Data Processing action)

You switch your perception from AR to VR or vice versa. Switching to VR causes your body to go limp, so don't do it somewhere dangerous. If you switch from VR to AR, you lose the bonus Initiative Dice from VR (**Changing Initiative**, p. 160). If you're link-locked (p. 229), you cannot switch interface modes.

You can only do this to yourself; you can't switch other people's interface mode.

TRACE ICON
(COMPLEX ACTION)

Marks Required: 2
Test: Computer + Intuition [Data Processing] v. Willpower + Sleaze

You find the physical location of a device or persona in the Matrix. After succeeding with this action, you know the target's location for as long as you have at least one mark on the target. This doesn't work on hosts because they generally have no physical location, or IC programs because they are confined to their hosts.

PROGRAMS

Programs (technically cyberprograms if they're for the Matrix) are files you can run on your deck. While a program is running, it makes your deck better or gives you more utility. You can't run more than one program of the same type on your deck at once (and no, changing the name of one copy of a program to run two copies doesn't work, chummer). You get the benefit of a program while it is running on your deck; as soon as you end it or swap it out for another program, it stops providing those benefits.

Your running programs appear as icons connected to your persona. As with all icons in the Matrix, the actual look of the program is customizable, but its look is generally tied to its purpose. A Hammer program might look like a hammer, a tommy gun, or a spiked baseball bat, but it can't look like a pocket watch or a trivet. Program icons are generally small in size, but the shape can be anything you think of that is thematically linked to its purpose (and approved by your gamemaster).

PROGRAM LISTING

Programs come in two categories. **Common** programs are ones that are pretty harmless and available most everywhere for hobbyists and Matrix professionals. **Hacking** programs are more dangerous and illegal to buy, own, or use without a license.

Here is the list of the most common programs.

MATRIX ACTION INDICES

The alphabetical listing in this chapter is great if you already know what you want to do, but sometimes you need something a bit more organized. This index lists Matrix actions by what they're meant for and which Matrix attribute they're connected with. For your convenience, the action type is listed with each action.

MATRIX ACTIONS BY FUNCTION

DEVICE MANIPULATION	TYPE
Control Device	Variable
Format Device	Complex
Reboot Device	Complex
Spoof Command	Complex

FILE MANIPULATION	TYPE
Crack File	Complex
Disarm Data Bomb	Complex
Edit File	Complex
Set Data Bomb	Complex

INFORMATION GATHERING	TYPE
Check Overwatch Score	Simple
Matrix Perception	Complex
Matrix Search	Special
Snoop	Complex
Trace Icon	Complex

MARK MANIPULATION	TYPE
Brute Force	Complex
Erase Mark	Complex
Erase Matrix Signature	Complex
Hack on the Fly	Complex
Invite Mark	Simple

MATRIX COMBAT	TYPE
Crash Program	Simple
Data Spike	Simple
Full Matrix Defense	Interrupt

MISCELLANEOUS	TYPE
Change Icon	Simple
Enter/Exit Host	Complex
Erase Matrix Signature	Complex
Grid Hop	Complex
Hide	Complex
Jack Out	Simple
Jam Signals	Complex
Jump Into Rigged Device	Complex
Send Message	Simple
Switch Interface Mode	Simple

MATRIX ACTIONS BY LIMIT

ATTACK	TYPE
Brute Force	Complex
Crack File	Complex
Crash Program	Complex
Data Spike	Complex
Erase Mark	Complex
Erase Matrix Signature	Complex
Jam Signals	Complex

SLEAZE	TYPE
Check Overwatch Score	Simple
Format Device	Complex
Hack on the Fly	Complex
Hide	Complex
Set Data Bomb	Complex
Snoop	Complex
Spoof Command	Complex

DATA PROCESSING	TYPE
Change Icon	Simple
Control Device*	Variable
Edit File	Complex
Enter/Exit Host	Complex
Grid Hop	Complex
Invite Mark	Simple
Jump Into Rigged Device	Complex
Matrix Perception	Complex
Matrix Search	Special
Reboot Device	Complex
Send Message	Simple
Switch Interface Mode	Simple
Trace Icon	Complex

FIREWALL	TYPE
Disarm Data Bomb	Complex
Erase Matrix Signature	Complex
Full Matrix Defense	Interrupt
Jack Out	Simple

**Control Device may or may not use Data Processing as its limit.*

COMMON PROGRAMS

Browse: This handy browser and search engine cuts the time for a Matrix Search action in half.

Configurator: When you run this program, choose a configuration for your deck other than its current one. This alternate configuration is stored in the Configurator program. The next time you reconfigure your deck, you may switch to the full configuration stored in this program instead of just swapping two attributes or programs, even if it means Configurator stops running at that point. The configuration stored in this program doesn't change when you use it, so you can recall it again if you reconfigure your deck to something else (assuming the Configurator program is running when you want to recall the stored information).

Edit: This program makes editing easier with a smart interface that learns your style and can even give you suggestions. Add 2 to the Data Processing limit for any Edit tests made while this is running.

Encryption: Activating the Encryption utility gives you a +1 bonus to your Firewall attribute.

Signal Scrub: By analyzing the background noise and incoming signals, Signal Scrub gives you Rating 2 noise reduction.

Toolbox: The memory management utilities in the Toolbox give you a +1 bonus to your Data Processing attribute.

Virtual Machine: This program creates a virtual memory space in your deck, giving you increased program capacity at the cost of system stability. Your deck can run two additional programs, but whenever your persona takes Matrix damage, it takes an additional box of Matrix damage that cannot be resisted.

HACKING PROGRAMS

Armor: This program works with your firmware as a second firewall, giving you a +2 dice pool modifier to resist Matrix damage.

Baby Monitor: The Baby Monitor program uses algorithms stolen from the Grid Overwatch Division and keeps track of your movements in the Matrix, so you always know your current Overwatch Score.

EXAMPLE

A spider hits Slamm-0! (who is of course using hot-sim) for a total of 8 Matrix damage. Slamm-0! (or rather his deck) resists this damage with Device Rating + Firewall, getting 4 hits. That means his deck takes 4 boxes of damage. The spider is running Biofeedback, so Slamm-0! (not his deck) must now use his Willpower + Firewall to resist 4P damage. Any unresisted damage sinks right into Slamm-0!'s brain, and he marks it off his condition monitor.

HOST: STUFFER SHACK™

The world's favorite convenience store is also on the Matrix! Each store has its own host, operated by its associated store. Stuffer Shack nodes sit in the Matrix on the virtual ground among the nearby devices. They are locked to their physical location rather than flying free among most Matrix hosts, which keeps them close to home ("Where a convenience store should be™"). According to the Stuffer Shack franchise manual, the inside of the host should look identical to the real-life version, but in practice the store managers are rarely well-versed in Matrix sculpting or host administration. As a result, the hosts are a kind of train wreck of retail space, local hangout, and clubhouse for wannabe hackers in the neighborhood. The look, feel, physics, and interaction rules in every Stuffer Shack is a little different, depending on the whim of the management and how much they've shelled out for their firewall software. Despite the chaos, you can buy real items in a Stuffer Shack host, and they'll either collect and hold your merchandise for pickup or deliver to your door if you're within their delivery area.

Biofeedback: When you're attacked, this program laces all of the attacks you make against other icons with dangerous biofeedback signals, the sort of drek that Black IC and G-men use. This program only works if the target is biological in nature (a security spider, for instance). When your attack causes Matrix damage, the target is hit with an equal amount of Stun (if the target is using cold-sim) or Physical (if the target is using hot-sim) biofeedback damage. This program also applies to damage caused by failed Attack actions against you. Biofeedback damage is resisted with Willpower + Firewall.

Biofeedback Filter: This program is like a firewall for your sim module, giving you a +2 dice pool modifier to resist biofeedback damage.

Blackout: This is a kinder version of Biofeedback. It works the same way, but only causes Stun damage, even if the target is using hot-sim.

Decryption: The code-cutting algorithms in this program give you a +1 bonus to your Attack attribute.

Defuse: This program creates predictive barriers between you and a Data Bomb, giving you a +4 dice pool modifier to resist damage from one.

Demolition: Demolition comes with the latest and most effective Data Bomb-coding techniques, adding 1 to the rating of any Data Bomb you set while this is running.

Exploit: This program analyzes and scans a target for weaknesses in its Firewall. You receive a +2 bonus to your Sleaze attribute when attempting a Hack on the Fly action.

Fork: You can perform a single Matrix action on two targets with this program. You make a single test, with

modifiers from each target both counting toward your dice pool. Each of the targets defend with their own dice pools. Determine the result of the actions separately against each target.

Guard: This program keeps an eye out for weaknesses the same way an attacker would, reducing the extra damage you take from marks by 1 DV per mark.

Hammer: Whenever you cause Matrix damage with an action, this offensive program lets you inflict +2 DV worth of Matrix Damage. This does not apply against targets that take damage from failing an Attack action against you.

Lockdown: When you cause damage to a persona, he or she is link-locked until you stop running this program or they successfully Jack Out.

Mugger: By actively tracking your marks, the bonus damage from them is increased by 1 DV per mark.

Shell: This program uses a set of filtering algorithms to give you a +1 dice pool modifier to resist both Matrix and biofeedback damage. This modifier stacks with similar modifiers from other programs.

Sneak: This utility bounces your Matrix traffic through unnecessary routes, giving you a +2 dice pool modifier to defend against Trace User actions. Additionally, if a demiGOD converges on you while this program is running, they don't get your physical location, although you're still hit with all the other bad stuff they throw at you.

Stealth: This clever program gives you a +1 bonus to your Sleaze attribute.

Track: The Track program keeps an eye on your targets for you, making it easier to find their meat world equivalents. Add 2 to your Data Processing attribute when making Trace User tests with Track running. Alternately, if the target is running Sneak, Track negates the +2 dice pool bonus from that program. Note that the program delivers one of the listed benefits, not both.

Wrapper: This program overrides the Matrix's protocols for icons. While this program is running, your icons can be anything you want them to be when you use the Change Icon action. From the lens of the Matrix, your Hammer program could look like a music file, your Ares Predator icon could look like a credstick, and your own persona could look like a Mitsubishi Nightsky. Another persona can see what the disguised icon really is with a Matrix Perception Test, but they need to at least suspect enough to check (**Matrix Perception**, p. 241).

PROGRAMS TABLE

PROGRAMS	AVAILABILITY	COST
Common Program	—	80¥
Hacking Program	4R	250¥
Agent (Rating 1-3)	Rating x 3	Rating x 1,000¥
Agent (Rating 4-6)	Rating x 3	Rating x 2,000¥

AGENTS

Agents are autonomous programs that are rated from 1 to 6. Each agent occupies one program slot on your deck. Agents use the Matrix attributes of the device they run on, and their rating (up to 6) for attributes. Agents also have the Computer, Hacking, and Cybercombat skills at a rating equal to their own. An agent runs as a program and can use programs running on the same device as them.

You can have your agent perform Matrix actions for you. When an agent is running, it has its own persona (and icon). An agent is about as smart as a pilot program of the same rating (**Pilot Programs**, p. 269).

Any attack on an agent damages the device on which it is running, rather than the agent itself (which is, after all, merely a program). This means that if you're running an agent on your deck, you and it share the same Matrix Condition Monitor.

HOSTS

Hosts in the Matrix are like a mini-Matrix on the grid. From the outside, it is a large icon, often sculpted to look like a building or some other place you can actually visit. Most are floating above the Matrix's virtual airspace, but some are tethered to physical locations, mostly stores, clubs, local venues, and other places that are heavily associated with a particular site in meat space.

The virtual space inside a host is separate from the outside grid. When you're outside of a host, you can't interact directly with icons inside it, although you can still send messages, make commcalls, and that sort of thing. Once you're inside, you can see and interact with icons inside the host, but not outside (with the same caveat for messages, calls, etc.).

When you enter a host, your persona actually enters the host icon. This can be through a door or other portal, but some hosts let you just pass through its outer skin. The inside of a host isn't limited by its external size, and it usually ranges between the size of a large house and that of a large metroplex. The higher the host's rating, the bigger it tends to be, but that's not a hard-and-fast rule.

Each host is on a specific grid. Like the rest of the Matrix, a host can be accessed from any grid. Hosts are part of the Matrix, so once you're inside a host, the grid you're on doesn't really matter. The Grid Overwatch Division tracks traffic to and from a host, which means it's still watching you when you've entered a host, though it does not closely monitor what you do there.

Hosts don't have to depend on GOD for protection. A host can run intrusion countermeasures, or IC, to defend itself. These programs are personas that seek out and repel or punish hackers. IC is ruthless and efficient, with the personality of a heart attack and the mercy of an empty clip in a firefight. You can fight off IC, but the host can always spawn more, so you can't really win

SAMPLE HOST RATINGS

EXAMPLES	HOST RATING
Personal sites, pirate archives, public education	1–2
Low-end commercial, private business, public libraries, small policlubs	3–4
Social media, small colleges and universities, local police, international policlubs	5–6
Matrix games, local corporate hosts, large universities, low-level government	7–8
Affluent groups, regional corporate hosts, major government, secure sites	9–10
Megacorporate headquarters, military command, clandestine head office	11–12

against IC. You can just hold it off long enough to get things done.

HOST ARCHIVES

Hosts have areas called **archives** that hold files that aren't in use. File archives are deep in the host's code, inaccessible to the average hacker. If you want an archived file, you'll have to convince someone who already has a mark on the file to bring it out of the archive first.

HOST ATTRIBUTES

Hosts have a Host rating. Unlike the ratings of devices, the Host rating ranges from 1 to 12. Hosts also have all four Matrix attributes: Attack, Sleaze, Data Processing, and Firewall. The ratings of these attributes are usually (Host Rating), (Host Rating + 1), (Host Rating + 2), and (Host Rating + 3), in any order. For example, a Rating 4 host might have Attack 5, Sleaze 4, Data Processing 7, Firewall 6.

A host's attributes are shared by itself and its IC programs.

HOST CONVERGENCE

GOD doesn't track personas inside a host, but it still keeps tabs on the traffic to and from the host. This means your Overwatch Score doesn't change when you enter a host, and it continues to accumulate while you're in the host. If you're in a host when you reach convergence, you're not burned and dumped like you are out on the grid (**Overwatch Score and Convergence**, p. 231). Instead, the host gets three marks on you and starts deploying IC.

If you leave a host after convergence, the grid's demiGOD converges on you immediately. You're better off just jacking out from the host.

INTRUSION COUNTERMEASURES

Intrusion countermeasures, or IC (pronounced "ice"), is a type of program that runs in hosts. The purpose of an IC program is to defend its host from attack, and it tends to be cold-heartedly ruthless about it.

Each IC program has a persona with its own Condition Monitor and Initiative Score. It should be treated as if it is in hot-sim, so it gets a total of 4D6 Initiative Dice in Matrix combat. IC uses the Matrix attributes of its host. The IC in a host and the host itself share marks, so if one IC program marks, they all do, and so does the host itself. Similarly, the IC and host instantly share spotting information, so if the host spots you, so does all its IC. Which usually turns out not well for you.

Individual IC programs alone can be a threat, but multiple IC programs working together can be deadly. Once the host starts to launch IC, it's time to finish up and buzz out of there.

SECURITY RESPONSE

When a host spots you doing something unauthorized, illegal, or just something it doesn't like, it informs its owner (or its owner's designee, like an employed security spider) and launches whatever IC programs it has to fight off the intruder. A host can launch one IC program per Combat Turn, at the beginning of each Combat Turn. The host can have up to its rating in IC programs running at once, and it can't launch more than one of each type of IC program at once. When an IC program takes enough damage to brick it, it crashes and vanishes from the host. The host can then run another copy of the IC at the start of the next Combat Turn if it wants to.

Most hosts don't have intrusion countermeasures running all the time. While IC is mercilessly efficient, it's not very bright. The added safety of omnipresent IC is outweighed by the cost of paying (or covering up) wrongful injury and death lawsuits, especially since IC can be deployed in seconds at the first sign of trouble. Typically, the only IC that remains active 24/7 is Patrol IC, which is mostly harmless to the innocent.

TYPES OF IC

IC exists to find, disable, destroy, and/or repel intruders. IC rolls the Host rating x 2 for any attacks, limited by the Host's Attack rating. The attack is a Complex Action, and

the Dice Pool to resist the attack is listed with each type of IC. As with all Attack actions, a failed attack causes damage to the IC. IC is always considered to be legal, so its attacks never give it an Overwatch Score.

ACID

Attack: Host Rating x 2 [Attack] v. Willpower + Firewall

Acid IC targets and overwrites your protective software. When it gets 1 or more net hits on its attack, it reduces your Firewall by 1. If your Firewall has been reduced to 0 already, it causes 1 DV Matrix damage per net hit on the attack. The reduction is cumulative and lasts until you reboot the targeted device.

BINDER

Attack: Host Rating x 2 [Attack] v. Willpower + Data Processing

Binder IC corrupts your base operating system. When it gets 1 or more net hits on its attack, it reduces your Data Processing by 1. If your Data Processing has been reduced to 0 already, it causes 1 DV Matrix damage per net hit on the attack. The reduction is cumulative and lasts until you reboot the targeted device.

BLACK IC

Attack: Host Rating x 2 [Attack] v. Intuition + Firewall

Black IC is the most feared intrusion countermeasures program on the market. The hosts that run it don't want you repelled—they want you dead. When it hits, Black IC link-locks you. It also causes (Attack) DV Matrix damage (+1 DV per net hit and +2 DV per mark on the target) along with an equal amount of biofeedback damage.

BLASTER

Attack: Host Rating x 2 [Attack] v. Logic + Firewall

Also known as Grey IC, a Blaster IC program's attack causes (Attack) DV Matrix damage, +1 DV per net hit and +2 DV per mark on the target, with biofeedback damage. The biofeedback from a Blaster program can only cause Stun damage. A single successful attack also link-locks the target.

CRASH

Attack: Host Rating x 2 [Attack] v. Intuition + Firewall

If Crash IC has a mark on you (through its host) and hits, one of your programs crashes, selected at random. Programs crashed this way can't be run again until after a reboot.

JAMMER

Attack: Host Rating x 2 [Attack] v. Willpower + Attack

Jammer IC turns your firewall against your own attacks. When it gets 1 or more net hits on its attack, it reduces your Attack by 1. If your Attack has been reduced to 0 already, it causes 1 DV Matrix damage per net hit on the attack. The reduction is cumulative and lasts until you reboot the targeted device.

KILLER

Attack: Host Rating x 2 [Attack] v. Intuition + Firewall

This IC is a simple but effective cybercombat program that causes (Attack) DV Matrix damage (+1 DV per net hit and +2 DV per mark) on the target with each successful attack.

MARKER

Attack: Host Rating x 2 [Attack] v. Willpower + Sleaze

Marker IC installs tiny worm programs that mess with your datastreams. When it gets 1 or more net hits on its attack, it reduces your Sleaze by 1. If your Sleaze has been reduced to 0 already, it causes 1 DV Matrix damage per net hit on the attack. The reduction is cumulative and lasts until you reboot the targeted device.

PATROL

Attack: n/a

Patrol IC acts more like an agent than other intrusion countermeasures. Its job is to patrol a host, scanning people's marks and looking for illegal activity using the Matrix Perception action on all targets in the host. While the act of placing a mark is an illegal activity, the act of simply *having* a mark is not. Once you have the mark, you are considered a legitimate user. Patrol IC has no attack, but it shares its information with its parent host. Since the Patrol IC doesn't use Attack actions, it doesn't take Matrix damage when it fails. Most hosts have Patrol IC and keep it running all the time.

PROBE

Attack: Host Rating x 2 [Attack] v. Intuition + Firewall

The task of Probe IC is to mark intruders for other IC. Every successful "attack" means another mark for the host and its IC on the target, up to the maximum of three marks.

SCRAMBLE

Attack: Host Rating x 2 [Attack] v. Willpower + Firewall

Scramble IC nukes your connection to the Matrix and forces you to reboot. If the host has three marks on you when this IC hits you, you reboot immediately, taking dumpshock if you were in VR.

SPARKY

Attack: Host Rating x 2 [Attack] v. Intuition + Firewall

Sparky IC is also known as "Psycho Killer," an upgraded version of the popular Killer IC. It causes (Attack) DV Matrix damage (+1 DV per net hit and +2 DV per mark on the target) with biofeedback damage.

TAR BABY

Attack: Host Rating x 2 [Attack] v. Logic + Firewall

The Tar Baby IC link-locks you when it hits. If you're already link-locked, it puts a mark on you, up to a maximum of three marks.

TRACK

Attack: Host Rating x 2 [Attack] v. Willpower + Sleaze

Track IC follows the datastreams between your icon and your deck. If this IC hits and the host has two marks or more on you, the host (and its owners) discover your physical location, which is usually reported to real-world authorities immediately.

TECHNOMANCERS

Technomancers are metahumans with the mysterious (if not mystical) ability to connect to and manipulate the Matrix without the aid of technology. They not only have this seemingly supernatural aptitude, but they have the ability to do things that no computer can do or *should* be able to do. Scientists and magical researchers haven't figured out what makes a technomancer tick, but they agree that it isn't science or magic. As you'd suspect, this makes a lot of people very nervous around technomancers. The fact that a lot of people believe that it might be fun for researchers to cut open a technomancer's brain to see how it works tends to make technomancers nervous around other people, especially megacorporate Matrix engineers.

Technomancers live in a world filled with the ebb and flow of data. They feel datastreams and empathize with icons. The Matrix is just part of the world they live in, as natural for them as walking is for mundane folks. Even technomancers don't really know how they do it—they just do it.

With their intuitive grasp of computers and the Matrix, almost all technomancers are wiz programmers. Most employers won't hire them, though, because the world just doesn't trust technomancers. In the public view, technomancers are creepy and unnatural. They communicate through the Matrix (*subverting* it, they say) with a thought, so suspicions of a global conspiracy abound. Whenever something goes wrong in the Matrix, especially if there are fatalities, the specter of the technomancer menace rises again in the media and news outlets. GOD can't track technomancers as cheaply as they can track deckers, and so they give little leeway or mercy in cases where a technomancer is involved. There is still a bounty on technomancers in some territories, and technomancy is punishable by death in a handful of places around the world. The end result of this is that technomancers hide their abilities and identities, and some even their talent with programming, to avoid harassment and threats.

This is not to say that all technomancers are bad or out to twist the Matrix to their own ends. Most just want to live their lives in peace. Very few are actually hackers, and only a few of those are talented enough to be shadowrunners.

TECHNOMANCER LIFE

While deckers might be thought of as scuba divers, using all sorts of gear to dive into and navigate the Matrix, technomancers are more like squid. The Matrix is their native environment, and they use it reflexively and instinctually. They don't have to make sure they've got the right gear on them, that it's turned on, connected, and functioning optimally. They want to do something, they dive into the streams surrounding them and do it.

Technomancers pick up the skills to deal with both the physical world and the data that's constantly flowing through the air around them. They learn how to keep from being overwhelmed in high-traffic areas, and how to keep from being withdrawn or depressed in static zones or places with weak coverage. They learn how to make their brains their own operating system and browser combined, an access point they can use to find what they want, all while keeping everything else from getting in and bludgeoning their brains with song lyrics, stock quotes, and celebrity gossip. And two million videos of kittens.

What their brains do—and plenty of researchers would love to know how this works—is learn the basic Matrix protocols, so that they can see the icons of the Matrix the way gear-based users see them. It's like learning a language for them, and once they know it, technomancers have trouble imagining a world without that virtual vocabulary. It lets them see the icons and AROs laid over the world around them, and allows them to drop into the trance that is the technomancer version of VR.

Most technomancers say the VR feels more comfortable to them, more "real." They say that the hard, unmalleable reality of meatspace feels foreign to them. They prefer to be surrounded by things that respond to their desires and commands, things that are reactive and alive with information, not dead and inert like real-world objects.

Technomancers tend to be fluid thinkers, talented analysts, or virtuoso programmers. While deckers work with gear, starting with the tool and producing a result, technomancers start with their desire and then devise or summon tools that allow them to do it. They can be very fast, creative, and unpredictable. Most non-technomancers find it best to either to have one on their side or never to meet one at all.

RESONANCE

The **Resonance** is what technomancers use to describe the energy that they feel and manipulate in the Matrix.

It consists of data, interactions between data streams, intentions, thoughts ... okay, nobody really knows what it's made of, but to technomancers it's a real thing they can feel and touch.

If you're a technomancer, you have a Resonance attribute. This attribute represents how connected you are to the Resonance. Your Resonance rating affects all of your Resonance abilities and your living persona. Your natural Resonance maximum is your Essence rounded down. For every point (or fraction thereof) of Essence lost, both your current Resonance Attribute and your maximum Resonance Rating are reduced by one. If your Resonance ever reaches zero, you lose the Technomancer quality and all Resonance abilities.

RESONANCE SIGNATURES

When you use a Resonance ability, you leave a unique signature behind in the fabric of the Resonance. This Resonance **signature** gets left on the target. If you're in a host, your signature is left there, too. A signature has a rating equal to the Resonance rating of whatever left it, and it lasts for one hour times its rating.

Other Resonance beings (technomancers, sprites, and ... others) can detect a Resonance signature by getting at least 3 hits on a Matrix Perception Test; noticing a signature comes in addition to the usual questions you get to ask. If you've seen a signature before, you can recognize it (the gamemaster might make you try a **Memory Test**, p. 152). With 5 or more hits, you also get the impression of what kind of being or ability left it there (again, that info is free). You can erase a signature with the Erase Signature action.

Resonance beings have their own signatures (with a rating equal to their Resonance) on themselves all the time. A sprite has the Resonance signature of the technomancer that compiled it, as do the signatures the sprite leaves. You can temporarily conceal the personal signature on yourself (or someone else), but it's only gone for 1 Combat Turn per hit on your Erase Signature test.

RESONANCE ACTIONS

Some actions you can perform as a technomancer are Resonance actions. These actions only operate in the Matrix, but they're not Matrix actions and don't follow those rules. The bad news is that you don't get the bonus dice for being in VR (those only come with Matrix Actions), but the good news is that none of it counts against your Overwatch Score. Resonance actions don't require marks. You can still perform normal Matrix actions, with all the rules that apply to them (including Overwatch Scores).

Almost all Resonance actions cause **Fading**, a mental drain on the technomancer (see p. 251).

CALL/DISMISS SPRITE
(SIMPLE ACTION)

Test: n/a

You call a registered sprite you have waiting in the Resonance, which appears at the beginning of the next Combat Turn. You can also use this action to send a sprite back to the Resonance, releasing it from any tasks it still owes you, which it does on its next action.

COMMAND SPRITE
(SIMPLE ACTION)

Test: n/a

You command a sprite to do something for you, using up one of its tasks.

COMPILE SPRITE
(COMPLEX ACTION)

Test: Compiling + Resonance [Level] v. Sprite Level

You compile a sprite (p. 254).

DECOMPILE SPRITE
(COMPLEX ACTION)

Test: Decompiling + Resonance [Level] v. Sprite Rating (+ compiler's Resonance)

You attempt to decompile a sprite (p. 254).

KILL COMPLEX FORM
(COMPLEX ACTION)

Test: Software + Resonance [Level] v. Complex Form Level + Resonance

You attempt to kill a complex form (p. 251).

REGISTER SPRITE
(COMPLEX ACTION)

Test: Registering + Resonance [Level] v. Sprite Level x 2

You register a sprite (p. 254).

THREAD COMPLEX FORM
(COMPLEX ACTION)

Test: Software + Resonance [Level] v. special

You thread a complex form (p. 251).

There's also Erase Matrix Signature (p. 239), which is a Matrix Action, not a Resonance Action. We thought we'd mention it here so you remember it's there.

LIVING PERSONA

Technomancers have a **living persona** they use in the Matrix. Your living persona's icon can be pretty much anything you like, following the rules for persona icons. You can change your icon with the Change Icon action, like normal persona users. Since your living persona is

just a persona, not a device, you don't have any onboard storage; this is easy enough to deal with because you can store files in nearby devices.

Your living persona's Device Rating is equal to your Resonance. Your Matrix attributes are calculated from your Mental attributes as listed on the Living Persona table. You cannot reconfigure your living persona or run programs, as those are abilities unique to commlinks and cyberdecks. You are not a device, so you cannot be a slave or master, nor can you be part of a PAN or WAN.

As a technomancer, you can only use AR and hot-sim VR (the only way you can use cold-sim VR is by using a cybredeck or commlink—ew). Since you're in hot-sim naturally, you may add your Resonance to your dice pool for all Addiction Tests for using hot-sim. You use your Mental and Matrix attributes when calculating your Initiative, and your Initiative Dice use the normal rules for AR or hot-sim VR use. Since you're so intimately connected to the Matrix, you get a +2 dice pool bonus to all Matrix Perception Tests.

You don't have a separate Matrix Condition Monitor. Instead, any boxes of Matrix damage you would take hit you directly as Stun damage.

LIVING PERSONA

MATRIX ATTRIBUTE	RATING
Device Rating	Resonance
Attack	Charisma
Sleaze	Intuition
Data Processing	Logic
Firewall	Willpower

REBOOTING YOUR LIVING PERSONA

You can reboot your living persona, if you want. Really, you're just shutting yourself off from the Matrix for a time, but it operates with the same mechanics as the Reboot Device action (although it doesn't count as a Matrix action). A lot of technomancers reboot their living persona before they go to sleep, using the reboot delay as a sort of built-in alarm clock; it keeps them safe from cyber-attacks while digital sugarplums dance in their heads.

USING MUNDANE ELECTRONICS

You can use a commlink or cyberdeck if you like. A lot of technomancers do in order to hide their abilities. If you use a persona on a commlink or deck, you can't use your Resonance abilities. That only works when you're using your living persona, and since you can only use one persona at a time—well, you get the idea.

THREADING

If you ask different technomancers how they perform the Matrix miracles they do, they'll tell you it's called **threading**, but they won't agree on how it works. For some it's a mental exercise. Others just ask the Matrix nicely to do what they want, and still others think about different urban brawl plays. However it's done, it gets results.

You can thread a **complex form**, a specific effect on the Matrix that you have learned to perform. Threading is accomplished with Thread Complex Form, a Resonance action (not a Matrix action). When you thread a complex form, you choose a **Level** for the effect. The higher the Level, the stronger the effect, but also the more risky it is to do. You can choose a Level up to three times your Resonance rating.

Threading is affected by modifiers due to noise, a target being on another grid, and the public grid. You can only use complex forms on icons you've spotted.

Some complex forms can be sustained through concentration. This lets their effects linger for as long as you sustain the complex form. Doing this is distracting, imposing a -2 dice pool penalty on all actions per complex form you're sustaining. If something happens that the gamemaster thinks might break your concentration, she'll call for a Simple Resonance + Willpower (2) Test to keep sustaining your Complex Forms. You can't sustain Complex Forms when you're unconscious.

Threading causes Fading based on the specific complex form and its Level, with a minimum Fading DV of 2. If you get more hits on your Threading test than your Resonance rating, the Fading is Physical damage; otherwise it's Stun damage.

There is a list of known and widely distributed complex forms in the **Resonance Library** (p. 252).

KILLING COMPLEX FORMS

If you encounter another technomancer with a sustained complex form, and you want to end the complex form without that technomancer's permission, you can use the Kill Complex Form action to end it. Make a Software + Resonance [Mental] v. target complex form Level + the threader's Resonance. Every net hit you get reduces the hits from the complex form's threading test. If you reduce that number to zero, the complex form ends.

Whenever you perform the Kill Complex Form action, you must resist Fading as if you had threaded the complex form you targeted.

FADING

Technomancers are powerful, but not inexhaustible. Resonance abilities strain the user, even to the point of collapse if they're used too much. Technomancers call this drain **Fading**. Fading is resisted with Resonance + Willpower. Fading can only be healed by the body's natural healing process, which means taking some time to rest.

Whenever a technomancer threads a complex form or summons a sprite, they must resist Fading damage from the mental exertion of shaping the Resonance according to their will. The amount of Fading damage is indicated by the complex form, although can never be less than 2 DV (before the resistance test). The Fading from Threading is Physical if you get more hits on the Threading test than your Resonance rating; otherwise it's Stun.

For compiling, decompiling, or registering a sprite, the Fading DV equals twice the hits (not net hits) generated by the sprite on the Opposed Test, minimum 2 DV. This applies whether the attempt is successful or not. If the sprite's rating is greater than the technomancer's Resonance, the damage is Physical rather than Stun.

RESONANCE LIBRARY

Technomancers create their own complex forms and then share them (or not). The most common complex forms have been compiled into a file known as the Resonance Library, which has seen wide circulation among technomancers. You can learn a complex form by analyzing it with a Software + Intuition [Mental] Test; divide 12 by the number hits on the test to get the number of days it takes to learn it. At the end of the period, spend Karma to learn the complex form. You may know a total of (Resonance x 2) complex forms.

Each complex form entry has a **Target** describing what it works on. A complex form with a Device target can also be used to target a persona. It also has a **Duration** listed as either I for immediate (it happens instantly with no lasting effects), S for sustained (you can sustain it), or P for permanent (if you sustain it for its Level in Combat Turns, its effects remain after you stop sustaining it). The entry for **Fading Value**, or FV, gives the DV of fading, based on L for the Level of the complex form.

CLEANER

Target: Persona • **Duration:** P • **FV:** L + 1

Illegal actions leave traces in the Matrix, but the Resonance can erase a few of them. Make a Simple Software + Resonance [Level] test. For each hit, reduce the target's Overwatch Score by 1.

DIFFUSION OF [MATRIX ATTRIBUTE]

Target: Device • **Duration:** S • **FV:** L + 1

This complex form entry is shorthand for four different complex forms, one for each Matrix attribute. Make an Opposed Software + Resonance [Level] v. Willpower + Firewall test. If you win, the target's attribute is reduced by your net hits. You can't reduce an attribute to less than 1.

EDITOR

Target: File • **Duration:** P • **FV:** L + 2

You infuse a file with Resonance long enough to manipulate its contents. Make a Software + Resonance [Level] test against the Intuition + Data Processing of the file's owner. You can make the same amount of changes to the file that you would be able to make with your net hits in Edit File actions.

INFUSION OF [MATRIX ATTRIBUTE]

Target: Device • **Duration:** S • **FV:** L + 1

This complex form entry is shorthand for four different complex forms, one for each Matrix attribute. Resonance floods the target device, boosting the specified attribute. The Level of the complex form must equal or exceed the value of the attribute being affected. The attribute is increased by the number of hits scored, up to twice the target's normal rating (any hits that would increase the attribute beyond this maximum are ignored). Each attribute can only be affected by a single Infusion at a time. If an attribute boosted by this complex form is swapped in a Reconfigure action, this complex form ends.

STATIC VEIL

Target: Persona • **Duration:** S • **FV:** L – 1

Resonance energy coils around you, hiding you from GOD. Make a Simple Software + Resonance [Level] test with a threshold of 1 if the target is on the public grid and 2 on any other grid. As long as you sustain this complex form and the target doesn't hop to another grid, the veiled persona's Overwatch Score doesn't increase due to time (p. 231). It still increases as a result of the target's illegal actions, though.

PULSE STORM

Target: Persona • **Duration:** I • **FV:** L + 0

You pull signals out of the Resonance and surround the target with them. Make a Software + Resonance [Level] v. Logic + Data Processing test. For each net hit you get, the target's noise is increased by 1.

PUPPETEER

Target: Device • **Duration:** I • **FV:** L + 4

You push Resonance commands into a target, forcing it to perform a Matrix action. Pick a target and a Matrix action for it to perform. Make a Software + Resonance [Level] v. Willpower + Firewall test with a threshold based on the type of action: 1 for a Free Action, 2 for Simple, and 3 for Complex. If you succeed, the target performs that Matrix action as its next available action.

RESONANCE CHANNEL

Target: Device • **Duration:** S • **FV:** L – 1

Instead of using Matrix channels, you communicate through a Resonance channel. Make a Simple Software + Resonance [Level] test. For each net hit, reduce the noise due to distance from the target device by 1.

RESONANCE SPIKE

Target: Device • **Duration:** I • **FV:** L + 0

You send a spike of raw destructive Resonance into the target, causing errors and mayhem. Make a Software + Resonance [Level] v. Willpower + Firewall test. Your target takes 1 box of Matrix damage per net hit, with no chance to resist.

RESONANCE VEIL

Target: Device • **Duration:** S • **FV:** L – 1

This complex form lets you make the target believe something has happened in the Matrix. It's a convincing illusion if you can succeed in a Software + Resonance [Level] v. Intuition + Data Processing test. Even if the target has reason to believe what it's seeing is fake, it needs to make a Matrix Perception Test with a threshold equal to your net hits to see through the illusion.

STATIC BOMB

Target: Self • **Duration:** I • **FV:** L + 2

Make a Software + Resonance [Level] v. Intuition + Data Processing test against all icons that have spotted you. If there's more than one, compare your hits to each of theirs separately. Each icon you beat loses you, and you're no longer spotted by those icons. Any icon that has a mark on you doesn't lose you, of course.

STITCHES

Target: Sprite • **Duration:** P • **FV:** L – 2

You knit the Resonance patterns in a sprite back together. Make a Simple Software + Resonance [Level] test. For each hit, remove 1 box of Matrix damage from the target sprite.

TRANSCENDENT GRID

Target: Self • **Duration:** I • **FV:** L – 3

You broaden your connection to the Matrix and connect to all grids at once. You take no penalty for acting across grids (because you're on all of them), but neither do others targeting you. You also don't take a penalty from the public grid. Make a Simple Software + Resonance [Level] Test. The effect persists for one minute for every hit you get. When you run out of hits, the complex form ends.

TATTLETALE

Target: Persona • **Duration:** P • **FV:** L – 2

The Resonance can be used to mimic the telltale signs of illegal activity in the Matrix—to your target's sorrow. Make a Simple Software + Resonance [Level] test. For each hit, increase the target's Overwatch Score by 1. This only works if your target has an Overwatch Score.

EXAMPLE

USING COMPLEX FORMS

Lemuel is a technomancer working to help his team sneak into a hotel. He decides this is best done in AR so that he can remain alert to his surroundings and help out with any meat world situations that might arise.

The hotel is a Renraku property, so Lemuel figures it would be best to do his work on the Renraku grid. The access point to the grid, which looks like the traditional torii often seen at Shinto shrines, is easy to see in the hotel lobby. He doesn't have access to the Renraku grid, and he doesn't want to work across grids, so he needs to hop over to the Renraku grid. He can do this with the mundane Hack on the Fly action, but he doesn't want his Overwatch Score to start just yet, so he threads the Transcendent Grid complex form. He adds his Software of 5 and his Resonance of 6 to his pool, making 11 dice; he wants some room in case he rolls well, so he chooses a Level of 5.

Lemuel rolls 4 hits, just under the Level he selected. Those 4 hits give him four minutes of clear access to all grids. He also has 2 DV of Fading coming his way, so he rolls his Willpower of 4 plus his Resonance of 6 (10 dice). He only gets 1 hit, which means he suffers 1 point of Stun damage.

Once he's on the Renraku grid, he has easier access to the devices and personas making their way through the halls of the hotel. He wonders if there might be a security spider hiding somewhere nearby, so he does a Matrix Perception Test, rolling his Computer 5 and Intuition 3 (8 dice, 10 with his bonus as a technomancer to Matrix Perception Tests) against the spider's Logic 5 and Sleaze 5 (10 dice). Lemuel gets 5 hits; his Data Processing Limit for the test is his Logic; his Logic is 4, so he only gets to use 4 hits. The spider rolls 3 hits, so Lemuel can make out the persona icon of a tangled skein of cords that reach out and plug into various device icons in the hotel.

Lemuel decides it would be good if the spider were a little hobbled while his team did their work. so he calls up a Diffusion of Attack complex form to keep the spider busy. Lemuel's Software of 5 and Resonance of 6 gives him 11 dice; he really wants to slow down the spider, so he goes with Level 6. He rolls 5 hits, so it was good he went as high as he did. The spider has Willpower 4 and Firewall 6, and he rolls 3 hits. Lemuel got 2 net hits, so the spider's normal Attack rating of 6 is going to be 4 as long as the complex form is sustained (which will give Lemuel –2 on all actions due to the effort of sustaining his newly Threaded complex form). Lemuel has to roll to resist Fading again—this time 7 points are coming his way. He rolls his 10 dice for fading resistance and only gets 3 hits. That means he gets 4 more points of Stun damage for a total of 5. He loses 1 more die due to the damage he's suffered. Once this job is over, it will definitely be time for a nap.

SPRITES

Sprites are digital creatures formed out of (or summoned from, depending on who you ask) the Resonance. Sprites are then placed in the Matrix, personas without devices. Sprites are a lot like agents, obedient and semi-autonomous but not very bright. Depending on their personality, a technomancer might think of a sprite as a tool, a program, a pet, a friend, or a spirit of the machine. When a sprite's code is analyzed, it looks like a kludgy mish-mash of code snippets and junk data that shouldn't work but does.

Sprites bend the rules of the Matrix just by existing. The Matrix isn't really sure what to do with a sprite. When a sprite is compiled, its own Overwatch Score starts, even though it hasn't had a chance to do anything illegal (it isn't fair to the little guys, but life ain't fair, chummer). When a demiGOD or a host converges on a sprite, it simply vanishes, even if it has tasks remaining.

Sprites have a Device Rating and Resonance equal to their Level, and all four Matrix attributes are based on their Level and the type of sprite you compile. Its Matrix Condition Monitor has 8 + (Level / 2) boxes. A sprite's Initiative is also based on its Level, and it has 4D6 Initiative Dice. A sprite's owner is the technomancer that compiled it, and when you compile a sprite, it has your Resonance signature. If its physical location is tracked, the tracker gets your physical location instead; this also happens when a demiGOD converges on the hapless little sprite.

COMPILING A SPRITE

Bringing a sprite into the Matrix to work for you is called **compiling**. When you compile a sprite, you choose a Level for the sprite, up to twice your Resonance rating. The higher the Level, the more powerful the sprite. Use the Compile Sprite action (a Resonance action, not a Matrix action). For every net hit on the Compiling test, you get one task from the sprite. You can spend one of these tasks having the sprite do one of the things on the list of compiled sprite tasks.

Compiling sprites causes Fading of 2 DV per hit (not net hit) it gets in its defense test, with a minimum of 2 DV. This Fading is Stun damage, unless the sprite's Level is greater than your Resonance, in which case it's Physical damage. You can only have one compiled sprite at any given time.

COMPILED SPRITE TASKS

A task is basically one job you ask/tell your sprite to do. It has to be a simple task without conditions or heavy decision-making requirements. A single task can be one of the following things: A single use of a sprite power; one Combat Turn worth of Matrix actions that apply to the same job; participation in cybercombat that lasts until all of the enemy combatants have been defeated or you've escaped to safety. If a sprite uses a sustained power for you, sustaining that power doesn't count against further tasks unless you change it in some way, like switching targets.

You can send a sprite to perform a **remote task** on another grid or in a host that you're not in. When you send a sprite on a remote task, it vanishes back to the Resonance when it's done, and you lose any remaining tasks.

EXAMPLE

Netta wants to compile a courier sprite to watch her back as she goes about her business. She doesn't need the most powerful being, so she goes with a level 3 sprite. Netta's Compiling skill is 5 and her Resonance is 6, for a total of 11 dice. She gets 4 hits on her roll, while the sprite rolls 3 dice and gets 2 hits. Netta has 2 net hits, which means the sprite owes her two tasks, but first she has to deal with Fading.

The sprite's 2 hits gives it a Fading DV of 4, and the fact that it is level 3, which is less than Netta's Resonance of 6, means it is Stun damage. She rolls her Resonance + Willpower, which is 6 + 3, for 9 dice. She gets two hits and absorbs half the damage, marking two boxes on her Stun Condition Monitor. No ill effects … yet.

For the first task, she has the sprite check the area out while she works on a stubborn bit of protection on a file. The gamemaster rolls a Matrix Perception Test with the sprite's 6 dice and gets two hits. That's enough to notice an icon, running silent, pretty close to Netta. She has the sprite find out the icon's type and rating, and the sprite says it's a persona with a Device Rating of 4. That could be dangerous.

Netta has one task left with the sprite, so she has it use the Cookie power to attempt to keep track of the persona for an hour. The odds are against the sprite—it's rolling 6 dice (Hacking 3 + Resonance 3) against the persona's Intuition of 4 and Firewall of 6. The sprite rolls well, scoring 3 hits on 6 dice, while the persona only gets 2 hits on its 10 dice. The cookie is in place, but with only one net hit it will provide a bare minimum of data.

Using the Cookie power is the sprite's second task, so its work is done. After hanging around an hour and reporting the results of its cookie, it decompiles and merges back into the Resonance.

REGISTERING A SPRITE

The Matrix doesn't know what to make of sprites, so they show up as illegal activity. This puts a limit on the time you can keep a sprite around before GOD finds it and crashes it. You can increase your sprites' longevity by **registering** them with the Matrix. This process takes a number of hours equal to the sprite's Level; during this time, the sprite's Overwatch Score does not increase due to time,

CROSS

and neither you nor the sprite can take other actions. At the end of this time, make an Opposed Registering + Resonance [Level] v. the sprite's Level x 2. This causes Fading of 2 DV per hit (not net hit) the sprite gets, minimum 2 DV.

If you get at least one net hit, your sprite is registered with the Matrix. Its OS is erased, but can be restarted if the sprite performs an illegal action. Add your net hits on the Registering test to the number of tasks your sprite owes you. The sprite is now a registered sprite and no longer counts toward your limit of one compiled sprite at a time. You can register a number of sprites equal to or less than your Logic attribute. Everything else is the same as for compiled sprites. Almost everything.

REGISTERED SPRITE TASKS

If you have a registered sprite, there is a special list of tasks you can have it do for you. Here's that list:

Compiled Sprite Task: A registered sprite can do anything a compiled sprite can do for you.

Aid Study: For the cost of one task, your registered sprite can give you a bonus equal to its Level to your dice pool when learning new complex forms. It costs one task per new complex form.

Assist Threading: Your registered sprite can add its Level to your dice pool to thread a complex form. This bonus lasts for one test.

Loaned Task: You can tell your registered sprite to follow the orders of another persona, even if that persona isn't a technomancer. You get to pick how many tasks you're loaning out. You don't get to pick what those tasks will be, or what they can't be, so make sure you trust whoever you loan your sprite to.

Remote Task: If you send a registered sprite on a remote task, it doesn't return to the Resonance when it's done. Instead, it comes back to you.

Re-register Sprite: You can attempt to re-register the sprite for one task. If you use the sprite's last task to do this, don't screw up. If you succeed, add your net hits to the number of tasks the sprite owes you (minus the one for re-registering, of course). If you fail, you're out of tasks, plain and simple.

Standby: You can tell your registered sprite to return to the Resonance but come when you call it. This costs a task, but it keeps the sprite from giving away your presence or getting in harm's way.

Sustain Complex Form: A registered sprite can sustain a complex form for you, so it takes the penalty from sustaining instead of you. Every task you use for this purpose lets the sprite sustain your complex form for up to its Level in Combat Turns. You can then take over sustaining again if you want.

SPRITE-TECHNOMANCER LINK

You have a mental link to your sprites as long as you're connected to the Matrix. You can communicate through this link with text, images, words, and so on. If you lose your connection with the Matrix, you also lose your mental link with your sprite(s). They'll keep working on whatever it is they were doing, but when they're done they'll either vanish, or if they're registered they'll hang around waiting for you. Once you're back online, you link up with your sprite(s) again.

Sprites are personas, but not devices; they can't be part of a PAN or WAN.

DECOMPILING SPRITES

You can decompile a sprite, trying to stuff it back into the Resonance and out of the Matrix. You can decompile your own sprites if you need to, but usually just dismissing them is enough.

To decompile a sprite, make an Opposed Decompiling + Resonance [Social] v. target's Level (+ compiler's Resonance if the sprite is registered). Every net hit reduces the sprite's owed tasks by 1. If the sprite is reduced to 0 tasks owed to its compiler, it returns to the Resonance on its next action. This causes Fading equal to 2 DV per hit (not net hit) the sprite rolls, with a minimum DV of 2.

SPRITE POWERS

The following powers are available only to sprites. The Sprite Database (p. 258) can tell you which sprites have which powers. Using a sprite power is a Standard Resonance action (not a Matrix action).

CAMOUFLAGE

The sprite can conceal a file within another file in such a way as to make it invisible to Matrix searches. Concealed files can only be found with a Matrix Perception Test that is specifically looking for the hidden file; even the sprite must make this test in order to find and extract the file.

COOKIE

A sprite uses its cookie power to "tag" a target persona with a cookie file that can be used to track the icon's Matrix activities. The sprite must successfully beat the target in a Hacking + Resonance [Sleaze] v. Intuition + Firewall test. If the sprite succeeds, the persona starts carrying the cookie file, none the wiser.

The cookie file runs silent and is protected with a rating equal to the sprite's Level. The file will log every everything the icon does, for example each host the persona enters, the details of any communications the persona engages in (with whom and when, but not the actual contents), any programs the icon uses, etc. Use the net hits to benchmark the depth of the data the cookie accumulates (1 hit providing a bare outline, 4 or more a detailed report).

At the end of a time determined by the sprite (or its owner) when placed, the cookie file transfers itself and its accumulated data to the sprite. Once the sprite has

it, it may turn it over to the technomancer. If the sprite isn't in the Matrix when the file transfers itself, the file is deleted.

Cookie files may be detected with a successful Matrix Perception Test performed on the carrying persona. Once identified, it may be removed by removing the file's protection and then deleting it.

DIAGNOSTICS

The Diagnostics power allows the sprite to evaluate the inner workings of an electronic device. The sprite can assist someone using or repairing the device with a Teamwork Test. The sprite makes a Simple Hardware + Level [Data Processing] test; if any hits are rolled, the character gets a +1 limit bonus, and each hit adds 1 die to the character's dice pool to use or repair the item. This power takes the sprite's entire attention; the bonus lasts until the sprite drops it or does something else.

ELECTRON STORM

This attack allows the sprite to engulf a target persona in a sustained barrage of corrupting datastreams. If the sprite beats the target in a Cybercombat + Resonance [Attack] v. Intuition + Firewall test, the target is swallowed in a hail of digital pulses. With the first successful attack and on each subsequent action the sprite performs while sustaining this power, it inflicts (Resonance) DV Matrix damage, resisted as normal. The engulfing storm also causes 2 points of noise to the target. If the sprite takes any Matrix damage, all of its electron storms end immediately.

GREMLINS

This power causes a device to mysteriously malfunction or operate in some (usually detrimental) manner. The sprite targets a device, making a Hardware + Level [Attack] v. Device Rating + Firewall test. If the sprite succeeds, the device suffers a glitch (p. 45). The gamemaster chooses a malfunction appropriate to the device and situation, like a jammed control, a looped signal, or a faulty reading. If the sprite scores 4 or more net hits, treat it as a critical glitch— the device crashes, burns out, jolts its user with an electrical shock, or some other goodie picked by the gamemaster.

HASH

The Hash power allows the sprite to temporarily protect a file with a unique Resonance algorithm in such a way that only the sprite can unprotect it. If the sprite stops carrying the hashed file it reverts to normal. If the sprite is destroyed while carrying the file, the hashed file is permanently corrupted and becomes worthless. The maximum time the sprite can use this power is Level x 10 Combat Turns.

STABILITY

A sprite can use this power on any persona or device for which it has a mark. Stability prevents normal malfunctions or accidents from afflicting the target (including both standard glitches and those induced by the Gremlins or Accident powers). Ignore standard glitches and reduce critical glitches to standard glitches.

SUPPRESSION

Sprites are confusing at the best of times, but a sprite using suppression is just bizarre, especially to hosts. If a sprite is in a host and using this power when the host launches IC, that IC is delayed from launching by (Level / 2) Combat Turns. Delayed IC can't act or be targeted.

WATERMARK

The sprite can tag an icon with an invisible marking that only Resonance-driven entities can see, kind of like a Matrix signature. This allows the sprite to secretly leave messages on Matrix objects. A sprite can overwrite an existing watermark with a new one. A watermark can be erased with the Erase Matrix Signature action; otherwise it lasts as long as the icon does.

SUBMERSION

Technomancers have a connection to the Resonance, but they can make that connection stronger by **submerging** themselves into the Resonance. Submersion is more of a spiritual experience than a technological one. When you submerge yourself, your ego is challenged, your awareness is stretched, and you rarely come out the other side quite the same person you were when you started. But it gives you a closer bond with the Resonance, and increased power comes with it.

Submersion is measured in grades, beginning with Grade 1 and increasing. Each grade has a Karma cost equal to 10 x (Grade x 3) Karma. Your Submersion grade can't exceed your Resonance attribute. If your Resonance is ever reduced below your Submersion grade, your grade is reduced (no refunds, but you can buy it back if you can bring your Resonance back up).

INCREASED RESONANCE

The natural maximum for your Resonance attribute is 6 + your Submersion grade. You still have to spend Karma to increase your Resonance attribute.

ACCESS TO THE RESONANCE REALMS

When you first submerge, you find your way to the secret **Resonance Realms**, places made of thought and information tucked away in the spaces between Matrix objects. These realms are only known to submerged

technomancers (and maybe sprites, but they're not talking). They are pathways and places not created by the hand of any metahuman. They're mysterious and possibly useful repositories of pure data, but they are unfortunately too mysterious for the scope of this book and will be explained in detail in *Data Trails*, the Matrix expansion book (sorry, omae).

ECHOES

Technomancers learn new powers called **echoes** when they submerge. Each grade of Submersion you gain gets you one additional echo. Unless otherwise noted, you can't pick the same echo more than once. When echoes can be taken multiple times, their bonuses stack.

Attack Upgrade: The Attack rating of your living persona increases by 1. This echo may be taken twice.

Data Processing Upgrade: The Data Processing rating of your living persona increases by 1. This echo may be taken twice.

Firewall Upgrade: The Firewall rating of your living persona increases by 1. This echo may be taken twice.

Mind over Machine: You get the benefit of a Rating 1 control rig. You may take this echo up to two additional times (for a total of three), with the effective control rig rating increasing by 1 each time you take it.

NeuroFilter: You get a +1 dice pool bonus to resist biofeedback damage. This echo may be taken twice.

Overclocking: You accelerate your living persona to act more quickly in the Matrix. You get an additional +1D6 while you're in hot-sim VR.

Resonance Link: This echo gives you the ability to establish a low-level, one-way empathic link with another technomancer of your choice. As long as you're linked, you can discern the dominant mood and emotions of your linked companion. You know whenever your companion is under attack or stress, feeling pain, or otherwise in danger. The Resonance Link works in only one direction (so your companion does not receive empathic signals from you), but if both of you take the echo with each other, you can make a two-way link.

Resonance [Program]: This echo lets you copy the effects of one common or hacking program (p. 245). Each time you take this echo, you must specify which program you are mimicking. You can take this echo more than once, each time for a different program.

Sleaze Upgrade: The Sleaze rating of your living persona increases by 1. This echo may be taken twice.

SPRITE DATABASE

There are five types of sprites listed here, but rumors abound that there are other kinds out in the Resonance. The "L" in the sprite description stands for the sprite's Level.

COURIER SPRITE

Courier sprites are great at delivering messages securely and are pretty good trackers.

CRACK SPRITE

If you need a sprite for a quiet run that stays under the radar, the Crack sprite has what you need.

DATA SPRITE

Data sprites are masters of finding and manipulating data. They make great librarians, searchbots, and trivia contest ringers.

FAULT SPRITE

The Fault sprite is the one you want to have your back in a fight. Cold as IC and twice as tenacious, they'll shred your enemies in the blink of an icon.

MACHINE SPRITE

Of all the sprites, the Machine sprite is the most likely to interact with the physical world, although that would happen through a device. They're experts at all sorts of electronics.

COURIER SPRITE

ATTACK	SLEAZE	DATA PROCESSING	FIREWALL	INITIATIVE	INITIATIVE DICE	RESONANCE
L	L + 3	L + 1	L + 2	(L x 2) + 1	4D6	L

Skills: Computer, Hacking

Powers: Cookie, Hash

CRACK SPRITE

ATTACK	SLEAZE	DATA PROCESSING	FIREWALL	INITIATIVE	INITIATIVE DICE	RESONANCE
L	L + 3	L + 2	L + 1	(L x 2) + 2	4D6	L

Skills: Computer, Electronic Warfare, Hacking

Powers: Suppression

DATA SPRITE

ATTACK	SLEAZE	DATA PROCESSING	FIREWALL	INITIATIVE	INITIATIVE DICE	RESONANCE
L – 1	L	L + 4	L + 1	(L x 2) + 4	4D6	L

Skills: Computer, Electronic Warfare

Powers: Camouflage, Watermark

FAULT SPRITE

ATTACK	SLEAZE	DATA PROCESSING	FIREWALL	INITIATIVE	INITIATIVE DICE	RESONANCE
L + 3	L	L + 1	L + 2	(L x 2) + 1	4D6	L

Skills: Computer, Cybercombat, Hacking

Powers: Electron Storm

MACHINE SPRITE

ATTACK	SLEAZE	DATA PROCESSING	FIREWALL	INITIATIVE	INITIATIVE DICE	RESONANCE
L + 1	L	L + 3	L + 2	(L x 2) + 3	4D6	L

Skills: Computer, Electronic Warfare, Hardware

Powers: Diagnostics, Gremlins, Stability

THE DANGER OF SIDE JOBS

"Blondie, you there?"

Ellida's 'link crackled into life as she headed south on I-5. She smiled and flicked an ARO to answer.

"I'm here, Legless. What's shakin'?"

"Got an armored limo on the 520 bridge. Too heavy for my rig. Thought of you."

"Yeah? Thought of me for how much?"

"Twenty percent."

She snorted. "Make it ten and I'll come save your ass."

"You're killing me." When she didn't answer, letting him stew in the notion that he had called in the contract acceptance to dispatch and now couldn't fulfill it—a serious black mark for any driver on a city contract—he sighed. "Fine. Ten percent. Someday, Blondie."

"Yes, but not today. Send me the details and I'll send you your cut when the job's done."

"Roger that. Out."

She made her way to the 520 bridge and told GridGuide that she needed a priority turnaround. Like magic, a gap opened up so she could make a U-turn and pull in front of the broken-down limo. Traffic was still moving smoothly, if a bit congested, thanks to the automatic rerouting of cars around the distressed vehicle.

Taking a couple of moments to look over the limo before she got out of her truck, Ellida saw that it was indeed armored, that there were two people inside, and that it was carrying some serious equipment in the back. Closer inspection through the tinted windows revealed a woman with a sheathed sword and a naked pistol scanning the traffic that flowed around the car. The other person seemed to be a young kid in a medical pod. The well-dressed troll standing next to the limo was also armed with some sort of pistol. The tailored suit hid it well, but not well enough.

Bodyguards. Or armed chauffeur and armed nursemaid. Same thing.

The presence of the kid assured Ellida that this wasn't going to be some sort of hijack. She nodded to herself and climbed out of her rig. As she did, she remotely opened the drone rack on the top of the cab and ordered Tekkei, her Dragonfly, to be her eyes in the sky. Just in case. You never knew with a stop. Especially since some drivers insisted on manually driving their cars like idiots. Or someone decided to spy on and record the whole thing—which happened with rich people.

The troll came around the limo to meet her. He turned out to be the smallest troll she'd ever met. *He can't be more than twenty-five centimeters taller than me,* Ellida marveled. Being a two-meter-tall Nordic blond, she liked her men big and unbreakable. She smiled to herself. *He probably thinks I'm the biggest human woman he's ever met.*

"What's the trouble?" Ellida offered her hand.

The troll took it in a firm but not crushing handshake. "System's dead. EMP burst. Maybe."

BY JENNIFER BROZEK

"Dead-dead, or do you want me to look at it and see if revival is possible?"

He gave a shrug. "It's not going anywhere. You're welcome to look at it." He leaned in and she could smell an understated, spicy hint of cologne. "But we're in kind of a hurry."

She nodded. Ellida understood what "hurry" meant. "Two hundred is the standard fee to get you to the nearest bay."

The troll looked her up and down, glanced at her big rig cab with its attached flatbed, and gave her a half-smile. "Interested in making a bit more than that?"

Ellida raised an eyebrow in response.

"What would it cost to get us to Boeing Field?"

Probably still bodyguards, but ... "We expecting company?"

The troll looked over his shoulder at the smoothly moving line of traffic. "Maybe."

Ellida put Tekkei on alert for fast, erratic-moving vehicles and then calculated. She really wanted to replace the old Hedgehog jammer with an Armadillo, and that last couple of grand was proving to be hard to earn. "Five thousand. Up front."

"Done."

No hesitation. No flinching. Frak. The troll was connected. "Damn. Should've asked for more."

This time, the troll's smile was handsome and genuine. "Probably."

She returned the smile and got to work. Quadriga, her truck, had all the bells and whistles she could afford—a thirteen-speed Paccar MZ 1000 HP engine, drone rack, mechanical arms and winch, and a few extras for when times got tough. Right now, times were easy and she attached the winch to the front of the limo. Then she maneuvered the arms into hauling the world's heaviest paperweight onto her flatbed.

Tekkei chirped in her head, warning her of two vehicles—a Suzuki Mirage and a modified Thundercloud Contrail—moving up fast, weaving through traffic. Ellida frowned and looked at what the Dragonfly was seeing: two motorcyclists—one human or elf, one obviously ork. Both of them in blue and silver. She glanced at the troll. He was looking back toward the east end of the bridge.

"Those your people coming up?"

He nodded, continuing to look back. "Think we've got some time, but ..." He left the unspoken request for her to hurry it up hanging in the air.

Ellida finished getting the limo on the flatbed and locked it in place with both chains and a maglock. You couldn't be too secure when toting rich people's goods. The whole time, the kid in the medical pod watched her with worried interest. Ellida did her best to ignore him. She didn't want anyone to know she could see inside the vehicle. That could lead to some unpleasantness.

"See no evil," Ellida muttered to herself before straightening up. "Let's go." She watched him glance at the limo for a

moment and saw his throat move. As he did, the two motorcycles pulled up. It was clear the runners belonged together—they weren't quite in uniform, but they wore similar-enough colors.

"Mind if I ride in the cab with you?" The troll's smile was hopeful. "Also, I need to pay you."

She shrugged. "All right." Ellida could think of multiple ways to kill her passenger if he got uppity. No one messed with a rigger in their vehicle.

After the two of them settled into the cab, she sent him the account information on where to transfer the funds. "You can call me Ellida."

"Trollface."

The nuyen tallied up in her account. "Trollface?"

He shrugged and smiled. "What you see is what you get."

Again she found herself smiling at him. The damned troll probably had tailored pheromones going. "Good to know."

As soon as they started rolling, Tekkei alerted her to a third motorcyclist on a BMW 2065. Another one in silver and blue. This one was hard to miss. His AR made him look like he and the motorcycle were on fire with silver-and-blue flame. The flaming dude shot past her and through traffic up ahead.

"Outrider?"

"Yep."

"Aren't you guys a bit ... matchy-matchy for shadowrunners?"

"Not runners."

Ellida glanced at Trollface. He smiled at her and said nothing more. She thought about what she knew of the area and frowned, setting off a data search while she checked the traffic between here and Boeing Field. Something was snarling up I-5 South in a major way. Just as she was going to mention it, her search came back with her answer.

A go-gang? A small go-gang on escort duty? With money? None of it made sense. Instead of asking questions, Ellida plotted a route around the I-5 snarl. SR-99. Of course. Right through some nasty territory. "I-5's frakked. We've got two choices: get stuck in traffic or go SR-99 past the shipyards." She said no more and let the client decide.

Trollface was quiet for a moment, then said, "SR-99."

Ellida nodded and put her hidden attack drones, Frick and Frack, on alert. They were a pair of Aztecnology Crawlers armed with a pistol and a taser, respectively. While she did that and headed onto SR-99, she listened to Trollface plan.

"Crispy, make a distraction in the downtown area just before the shipyards but don't get it cranky until after we've passed. Slaegan, go with him. Keep him from burning the place down. Solo, you've got the rear. We should have a clean field for you to deal with things." He turned to her. "Don't stop. No matter what. Get us to the airfield."

Ellida didn't look at him. She was too busy driving, scanning the traffic with Tekkei, and checking GridGuide for problems. "Don't teach your grandma to suck eggs." Trollface didn't respond in words but she saw him nod from the corner of her eye.

By the time they passed the shipyards, there was a full-blown riot going on in the downtown district that blocked traffic on both SR-99 and I-5. Ellida had a clear line all the way down to the Duwamish Waterway, which gave her a good view of the bikers waiting on the overpass.

"We got trouble ahead."

Then she saw the barrier half-balanced on the edge of the overpass. The gangers were struggling to get it over the railing. Trollface saw it, too. "Frak. Disassemblers. Solo, be a good girl and deal with these bastards."

The rear motorcycle sped by at tremendous speed, heading toward the off ramp. The gangers, huge trolls, an ork, and several humans shifted to meet Solo, but they weren't ready for what they got. The woman was more than she seemed as her first kick literally knocked the head off the first ganger who came to meet her.

Ellida then turned to focus on her job and get them out of harm's way. A panel slid back in the hood of the cab, and a pop-up turret with a pair of Ares MP-LMGs appeared. She took aim at the gangers on the overpass. She didn't have to get them all. She just had to get enough to keep them from dropping the barrier onto the freeway.

As she fired at them in controlled bursts, making sure she didn't waste too much ammo, the drivers of the few cars around her panicked, slamming on brakes and spinning out of control. It was just as well. The gangers on the overpass who weren't fighting with Solo returned fire. While Trollface ducked and winced as the bullets hit the window, Ellida didn't. She had bought the best bulletproofing money could buy. Though she grimaced at what the assault was doing to her custom paint-job. Quadriga would need a lot of TLC after this.

When it was clear the Disassemblers weren't going to be able to drop the barrier, several jumped on motorcycles to escape the whirling death of Solo and pursue the rig and its cargo. One crazy ganger jumped to the top of the cab, landing hard but managing to hold on—at least until Frick crawled out of his hole and shot the ork in the face with its attached Colt M1991. The ganger tumbled off, screaming. It was an old gun, but it still did the job.

She heard Trollface call everyone in for escort as the rig went by the overpass and the first onramp. Ellida saw Solo catch up to one of the pursuers and kick him into a ditch.

"Slaegan is going to have to jump on. Don't hurt him."

"The ork?"

"Yeah."

Ellida nodded. "Where?"

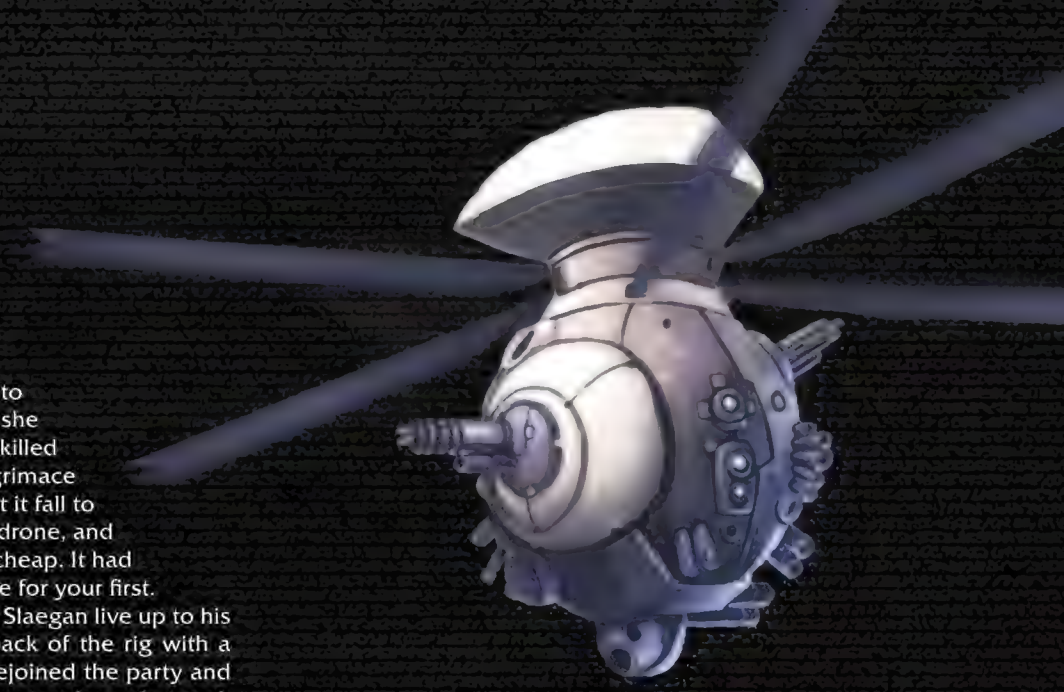
"There."

Looking up, she watched Slaegan toss a troll onto the freeway, where he tumbled to the side and popped up like the world's biggest whack-a-mole. He was too far to the side for her to run over. She saw him readying himself to jump at the truck. Slaegan was doing the same. If she swerved, both would miss. She would have to trust that Slaegan could deal with him.

As both took flying leaps for the big rig, Tekkei alerted her that another flying drone had come into its airspace and was tracking her. Through her eyes in the sky, she saw that it was an old, refitted Strato-9 with Disassemblers' colors. Stolen from—or sold by—Lone Star, the thing was still bad news.

She shifted her focus to driving and the Dragonfly only, trusting that Trollface and his gang would deal with the rest. Ellida jumped fully in, becoming the Dragonfly as it flew above the Strato-9. Assuming the rigger in charge of the drone knew what they were doing, they'd already seen her. She watched for a moment to see if it would respond. When it didn't, she dived down and landed on top of it.

The resulting shock just about knocked Ellida back into her body. The rig swerved to the side, almost tumbling Slaegan



off the back of the flatbed. She mentally shook her head and held onto the top of the drone, hoping the tazer function was a one-shot deal. Without waiting to find out, she set her vibro-blade pinchers to work and began gutting the enemy drone from the top. The second shock still hurt but had a lot less punch. It didn't slow her.

When the Strato-9 failed and started to fall, Ellida tried to take off. That's when she discovered that one of the shocks had killed her wings and she couldn't fly. With a grimace of regret, she pulled out of Tekkei and let it fall to its destruction. It had been a good little drone, and she'd miss it. It didn't matter that it was cheap. It had been one of her first, and you always care for your first.

Coming back to herself, she watched Slaegan live up to his namesake and knock the troll off the back of the rig with a sledgehammer to the face. Crispy had rejoined the party and had let loose a flaming oil slick several meters long that took out another motorcyclist. Solo had a sword out and slashed a motorcyclist in red armor through the neck.

"Is that all of them?" she asked, still mourning the loss of Tekkei.

Trollface nodded. "Yeah. I think so. At least until we get to the airfield."

"I hope this kid is worth it."

He gave her a long look. Then nodded. "Yeah. He is. At least to his parents he is."

"What's wrong with him?"

"Nothing. Not anymore."

She was still debating about asking for more information when he answered her unspoken question.

"It was VITAS-induced organ failure. His family got a replacement. Deltaware."

VITAS. No wonder the kid was in a medical pod. "And he's fixed? Not communicable?" Ellida shivered at the thought of VITAS breaking out again in the Seattle area. And deltaware? She'd heard about a theft at a local high-tech body shop. Her estimation of Trollface and his go-gang jumped up a notch.

"Doc fixed him right up. He's good. Or we wouldn't have taken the run."

"I should have asked for more money."

Trollface smiled that handsome smile at her. "Well, there's more money where that came from for a good smuggler and rigger. If you want more work, that is."

She used the turn into Boeing Field to delay her answer. "Look sharp. We're here."

"I always look sharp."

Ellida smiled as she scanned the gates, the suited people waiting, and the Gulfstream Luxe V jet beyond them. There was a sense of heightened awareness now that the big rig was here but no sense of fear of attack. One of the black-suited men waved the Hauler through the gates. As she parked, the gates were closed and more people in armor appeared with weapons. They set up facing outward.

She wanted to spend some time examining that beauty of a luxury private jet, but instead she went to work unloading the limo from the flatbed. She stood by the front of Quadriga looking over the damage to the cab and its paintjob while the medical pod with the kid was taken from the limo to the plane. She looked forward to giving it the new paint job it deserved.

The rest of the gang gathered up and Trollface sauntered over to talk to them. Crispy looked a bit singed. Slaegan was bloody but didn't seem to care. Solo was missing part of her jacket, and her exposed flesh glowed with magical armor. The woman from the limo walked over to Solo, who took off her helmet. It was clear that the two women were twins. They talked quietly, then looked at Trollface.

As soon as the kid was away, Ellida assumed that Boeing Airfield wouldn't want a dead limo sitting in the middle of their road and got to work getting it back on the flatbed. She noticed the left mechanical arm hitching as it wrestled the limo into place. Another expense to deal with.

Frick let her know that Trollface and Slaegan were headed her way as she locked the limo into place. She turned to them. "So. Where do you want the limo taken now?"

Slaegan and Trollface looked at each other. Trollface shrugged. "Keep it. Consider it a bonus for a job well done."

She glanced at the retreating plane. "They don't want it back?"

"Nah. It did its job." He gave her that half-smile again. "Mind giving us a ride back the way we came? Just to Downtown."

Looking at the troll and the ork, Ellida shrugged. "Sure, but one of you has to ride in the back."

Slaegan didn't respond with words. He just nodded and hauled himself onto the flatbed and got into the limo. The other gangers got back on their motorcycles, the women riding double, and readied themselves to leave.

As Ellida and Trollface got into her cab, Trollface grinned wide. "So, got time for dinner tonight?"

She shook her head with a small smile. "Maybe in a few hours. I'll message you when I get off work."

"My treat," he added as he settled in.

Considering that she would just barely break even without the extra bonus of the limo due to what her poor rig had gone through and everything she would have to fix or replace, Ellida nodded and said, "Damn straight."

RIGGERS

Driving a car remotely can be great. A virtual control panel opens before you in AR or VR, the car's built-in sensors appear as a display, and your every command is relayed to your car and obeyed as though you were physically at the wheel. You could make the car drive with a gesture or a thought and keep most of your attention on something else, like watching Neil the Ork Barbarian split the heads of his enemies like so many ripe melons. That's how most denizens of 2075 drive their vehicles, when they drive at all.

But what if you could *be* the car? What if you could tap the same unconscious impulses you use to move your limbs, flick your eyes to focus on different objects, and instinctively keep your balance and avoid obstacles, and use them for your car? What if you could not just make the car drive, but *dance?* If you did that, you'd be a rigger.

FREE AS A BIRD

Being a rigger isn't like being any ordinary wheelman. You have the ability to become your vehicles and drones, at least virtually, making you more than just the sum of flesh and metal. Movement uses a lot of different parts of your brain, as do your senses, and the control rig connects to every one of them. That makes it easily the most invasive piece of headware you can buy, and that's saying something about the people who buy them.

When you jump into a vehicle or drone, your control rig feeds information to your brain to make you feel like the machine you're jumping into. There's a bit of a virtual transformation process that takes a second or two, helping ensure that the change doesn't hit you like a brick to the noggin. After that, your control rig uses signals from your brain to control the machine, so it moves the way you want it to, so seamlessly that you might as well be one being. Acceleration, braking, maneuvering, all as easy wiggling your big toe or shifting your weight in your meat body.

There's more to a control rig than just movement. It also interprets input from the vehicle and feeds it to your brain as sight, sound, feeling, scents, and other sensations. An empty gas tank feels like hunger. A sensor package becomes your eyes and ears. The rigger interface package comes with an accelerometer so you can feel balance. And of course, damage feels like pain.

THE GAME IS RIGGED

Riggers serve in a lot of roles in the Sixth World. They most often serve as drivers (obviously), although only a small percentage of professional drivers—bus and taxi drivers, chauffeurs, delivery drivers, and so on—actually spring for a control rig. Drivers who need to be very precise or very efficient, like high-speed couriers, race drivers, emergency service drivers, etc., have a much higher chance of being riggers.

Riggers can perform a large number of services using drones, controlled remotely from a central location. Traffic monitoring and police beats are often covered by drones, usually flying ones. Riggers use drones for hazardous jobs, like reactor maintenance, firefighting, mining, and demolitions. Drones are often the first forces to arrive at a violent crime scene, partly because they're faster, but mostly because it's safer for law enforcement.

Riggers don't have to stick to vehicles and drones. Other devices can be adapted for rigger control, too. Mounted turrets, especially water cannons on firefighting trucks and anti-aircraft batteries on naval vessels, are often rigged. There's a specialized rigger interface for musical instruments that only partly overrides the user's motor function so he can still play to an audience on stage. There are a lot of large and/or secure facilities that have a rigger running and monitoring the entire building.

RIGGERS IN THE SHADOWS

But that's all just in regular life. You want to hear about riggers in the shadows.

Riggers are great in a fight. A single rigger can put several combat drones into a fight at once and use them as a mobile strike force or for suppressive fire. In larger spaces or on the run, a rigger in a tricked-out vehicle can be as effective as a tank. Even in smaller spaces, don't underestimate the maneuverability and firepower (and attitude) of a rigger on an armed motorcycle.

Riggers are also good for recon. Microdrones and minidrones can sneak into secure areas and collect information for you. Larger drones can patrol a perimeter.

If you're clever, a rigged car innocently parked in a strategic location can feed information on the entire area.

Of course, you can drive the team around, too. It is, after all, your main thing. Especially when "around" means "at a hundred and fifty kilometers per hour up I-5 while they hang out the windows firing at a go gang/police squad/corporate gunship/enraged dragon."

BEING THE MACHINE

Rigging starts with the important first step of having a control rig augmentation (p. 452) for your character. That's only a starting point, though—there's a lot more to being a rigger than just having a rig. Like everything on the street, it's also about your skills. And then, the most SOTA rig and the best skills still won't mean squat without something to take control of, and that means a vehicle or a drone. Or several drones, in which case you're going to want a rigger command console, or RCC. No one ever said being this cool was gonna be cheap.

MORE THAN METAHUMAN

A control rig is the place to start, but it's not the only thing you'll need as a rigger. Just as every rigger needs a vehicle, every control rig needs a rigger interface. The rigger interface is specialized gear that is fitted to a vehicle and allows you to jump in, rigger-style. Drones are designed for use by riggers, and have been designed with the rigger interface built in. Nearly all vehicles need to have the interface added as an after-factory option, however, except for military and law-enforcement vehicles.

THE CONTROL RIG

The control rig implant connects to a lot of different areas of your brain. It uses your motor cortex, of course, along with parts of your cerebrum, brain stem, and the sensorium, with a few tendrils snaking around your pre-frontal and frontal cortices. It has a built-in sim module, so you can use it for DNI with other devices. It also comes with a universal data connector and about a meter of retractable cable (it's like getting a free datajack).

COMPLETE CONTROL

Vehicles and other devices (like doors, trid-sets, and so on) can be controlled in four ways. **Manual control** requires actual physical controls, like a steering wheel, throttle, buttons, an AR display, or anything else a person can manipulate to control the device. **Remote control** is the result of the Control Device action (p. 238), and **rigger control** is the result of jumping into the device. **Autopilot** requires that the device have a pilot program, which most vehicles and drones do.

CONTROL OVERRIDE

A device can only be controlled one way at a time. You can't, for example, have a person manually firing a turret at the same time you're firing the same turret to get extra shots. Some control methods can be overridden by other methods, and the highest in this order controls the device. At the top of the order is rigger control, followed by remote control, then manual control, and lastly autopilot. You can override someone else's control on a device by using a method that comes in higher on that list, so if you issue a command through a control rig, attempts to maneuver at the same time using a remote control or manual control will be overridden. Once a device's control is overridden, it cannot be controlled by a method equal to or lower than it in the order until the Initiative Pass after the current controller relinquishes control (voluntarily ... or not).

RIGGING SKILLS

The skills you mainly want to look at as a rigger are the Vehicle Active skills. Those are all of the skills that begin with the word "Pilot," plus the Gunnery skill so you can shoot from your vehicles. Typically, you'll use Pilot Ground Craft most often, since you're something of a ground-dwelling creature yourself. If you get drones that are not ground craft (probably flying ones), you might want the Pilot skill(s) for the drones, too.

Vehicle Active skills are on p. 146.

RIGGING AND YOU

Riggers have a special set of rules when they're jumped in. This makes them more powerful, but also exposes them to more risks. Here's the skinny on all of the specialness you'll have as a rigger in the Sixth World.

TAKING THE JUMP

If you want to jump into a vehicle (or drone, or turret, or articulated six-axis arc welder), there are some prerequisites. You need an implanted control rig (if you don't have that, you're in the wrong chapter), you need to be the owner of or have three marks on the vehicle or drone you're jumping into, and of course you need the vehicle to have rigger interface gear.

Jumping into a vehicle is a Complex Action if you're in AR, or a Simple Action if you're already in VR when you make the jump. If you're using a direct connection and already plugged into the vehicle or RCC, you can jump into a vehicle directly from your meat body by taking a Simple Action.

From the Matrix, your icon and the device icon merge into a single icon. Usually, it's just your icon there, but you can make it look like something else if you want separate icons indicating "you" and "you jumped into a rigged death machine."

VR AND RIGGING

When you're jumped into a vehicle or other device, you're in Virtual Reality mode. The control rig allows you to treat Vehicle actions the same way you treat Matrix actions, so any bonus you get to Matrix actions also apply to Vehicle actions when you're jumped in; this includes Vehicle Control Tests, Gunnery Tests, and Sensor Tests.

Just like in the Matrix, you have the option of using cold-sim or hot-sim while rigging. If you're using cold-sim, you get +2D6 to your Initiative (3D6 total), and any biofeedback damage you take is Stun. If you're using hot-sim, you get +3D6 (4D6 total) Initiative dice, and a +1 dice pool bonus that applies to all Matrix test (including Vehicle actions), but all biofeedback damage is Physical damage.

RIGGING AND LIMITS

When you're jumped into a vehicle, drone, or other device, the limits of that device are increased by the rating of your control rig. This includes vehicle and drone Sensor, Speed, and Handling, and the Accuracy of mounted weapons when used by the rigger. The control rig also connects more smoothly through an RCC when operating in VR.

NOISE AND RIGGING

If you're rigging via wireless, all of your actions suffer from a Noise penalty (see p. 230). If you're using a direct connection, you don't have to worry about Noise at all. A rigger's data cable gets a lot of use for this reason.

PHYSICAL DAMAGE

Whenever the vehicle or other device you're jumped into takes Physical damage, the feedback can hurt you. Whenever the vehicle or drone you're jumped into takes boxes of damage, you must resist half (rounded up) of that damage as Biofeedback damage (p. 229).

MATRIX DAMAGE

When you take Matrix damage, it goes to the first device you're using for your persona, not the device you're jumped into. If you used your commlink or rigger command console to enter VR before jumping in, your commlink or RCC (respectively) is the target of Matrix damage to your persona. If you're directly connected to the vehicle you're jumped into, the vehicle takes the Matrix damage.

JUMPING OUT

When you want to jump out of a vehicle, drone, or other device, you use the Switch Interface Mode action (see **Switch Interface Action Mode**, p. 243) to go to VR or AR. If you're using a rigger command console, you can instead use the Jump into Rigged Device action to jump directly to another device on your PAN.

If the vehicle, drone, or device you're jumped into is destroyed while you're jumped in, you suffer dumpshock (6 DV biofeedback damage, p. 229).

RIGGERS AND DECKERS

As you've probably already guessed from all this talk about Matrix damage, the hacker is the rigger's natural enemy. While riggers and deckers do have a lot of similarities—sharing a few programs, using gear in the Matrix, lots of time in VR—don't get the two confused. Deckers and technomancers may rule the Matrix, but riggers have great power in the meat world. So respect the hackers, but don't fear them. Their software can mess with your hardware, but your headware can mess with their wetware, usually in the form of cranial trauma by gunshot wound. Or tire tracks in sensitive places.

RIGGER COMMAND CONSOLE (RCC)

A *rigger command console,* or RCC, is like a deck for controlling drones (or other vehicles and devices). It's about the size of a briefcase. It can act like a commlink and has all the features of a commlink in addition to the cool drone stuff. The main purpose of the RCC is to create a PAN with your drones. This gives the standard master-slave benefits (see **PANs and WANs**, p. 233), but the RCC comes with some extra features.

NOISE REDUCTION & SHARING

Along with all the standard features of a commlink, rigger command consoles have Noise Reduction and Sharing ratings that you set when you boot the console. The Noise reduction rating is straight-up Noise Reduction (p. 230), which is cumulative with other forms of Noise Reduction. The Sharing rating is the number of autosofts you can run on the RCC that simultaneously run on all slaved drones at the same time. One caveat: if a drone is running any of its own autosofts, it cannot benefit from the RCC's autosofts.

The total of both ratings cannot exceed the device rating of the RCC. You can adjust the values of these two special ratings with a **Change Device Mode** action (p. 163). Yeah, that means if your RCC has a Device Rating of 1 it can only have one or the other feature running at a time.

DATA PROCESSING & FIREWALL

Rigger command consoles have the familiar Data Processing and Firewall ratings from both commlinks and cyberdecks, but they lean toward commlinks in their functionality since they are not designed for versatility and cannot be readjusted on the fly. Data Processing is used to determine Initiative when running in VR and acts as the Limit for all Command tests performed on the RCC. Firewall is used to defend against unwanted wireless intrusion onto the entire slaved drone network.

GROUP COMMAND AND JUMPING AROUND

Your RCC manages several parallel connections at once, so you can give a command to one, all, or some of your slaved drones with the same Simple Action. This multi-connection also lets you jump from one slaved drone to another without first jumping out of the drone you're leaving. Commands issued from your RCC are acted on during the drone's Action Phase, not yours.

Drones receiving multiple contradicting commands on the same control levels (see **Control Override**, p. 265) before they have a chance to enact those commands on their Action Phase fail to perform any of them and instead send an error message back to the users attempting to issue the commands.

PANS & WANS (RIGGER STYLE)

If you want extra protection for your drones and the ability to command them all at once, you can slave them to your RCC. Your RCC can handle up to (Device Rating x 3) slaved drones, becoming the master device on that network. The group of your slaved drones plus your master RCC is called a **personal area network**, or PAN.

Whenever a slaved device is called on to make a defense test, it uses either its own or its master's Rating for each Rating in the test. For example, if your slaved rotodrone is the target of a hacker's Brute Force action, it could use your Willpower in place of its Device Rating, and your RCC's Firewall in place of its own Rating, assuming that either or both of these Ratings improve on what it already has.

The same rules for marks on slaved devices apply in the RCC-drone relationship as in other Matrix couplings. Most important to you are that if you get a mark on a slave, you also get a mark on the master, and that if an attacker has a direct connection, your drone can't use you for help. For more details, see **PANs and WANs**, p. 233.

COMMAND CONSOLE TABLE

CONSOLE	DEVICE RATING	AVAILABILITY	COST	DATA PROCESSING	FIREWALL
Scratch-Built Junk	1	2R	1,400¥	3	2
Radio Shack Remote Controller	2	6R	8,000¥	3	3
Essy Motors DroneMaster	3	6R	16,000¥	4	4
CompuForce TaskMaster	4	8R	32,000¥	5	4
Maersk Spider	4	8R	34,000¥	4	5
Maser Industrial Electronics	5	8R	64,000¥	3	4
Vulcan Liegelord	5	10R	66,000¥	5	6
Proteus Poseidon	5	12R	68,000¥	5	6
Lone Star Remote Commander	6	14R	75,000¥	6	5
MCT Drone Web	6	16R	95,000¥	7	6
Triox UberMensch	6	18R	140,000¥	8	7

There are also **wide area networks**, or WANs, with multiple devices slaved to a host. This is the world of that special kind of rigger, the security spider. They slave their RCC to the building's host and connect to the entire security system, including all of its slaved drones. When you're inside a host, your effective "physical distance" to drones slaved to that host becomes zero, even if you're on the other side of the world. The spider-rigger is often teamed up with a spider-decker to help against hacking intrusions on the security system.

ELECTRONIC WARFARE FOR RIGGERS

No one likes getting jammed out of controlling their own stuff. Yeah, the dog-brain pilot takes over, but who wants that thing running the show?

If you're using an RCC, you can compensate for noise on the fly. Take a Complex Action and make an Electronic Warfare + Logic [Data Processing] test. The hits from this test act as Noise reduction (cumulative with all other Noise reduction) for the rest of the current Combat Turn.

You can turn the tables on an enemy rigger or hacker by using a jammer (p. 441). Some rigging purists say that using jamming in a rigger duel is dirty pool, but sometimes it's just what you need to save your keister.

GETTING HACKED

Rigger command consoles and vehicles, including drones, are frequent targets of enemy deckers trying to get the upper hand on an opponent. Riggers aren't deckers, but they aren't completely inept in the world of electronic warfare. Here are a few important Matrix Actions riggers need to know about.

When you know there's a Matrix attack coming, you can use the Full Matrix Defense action to bolster your cyberdefenses. This option slows you down a bit, but it's often better than losing control of your RCC or a precious drone.

Sometimes it's better to lose a drone for a few seconds than to have it turned against you or sent careening into the nearest dense object. You can use the Reboot Device action to cut off an enemy hack before it gets too far. This take a little time, as your drone won't come back online until the end of the following Combat Turn, so be aware of the drone's environment when you perform this trick. A hard reboot won't automatically result in drone wreckage if you're careful. An aerial drone that can glide on its wings or on autorotation for a few seconds will be fine when it comes back up, and surface drones should be okay as long as they're not going too fast. If you're flying a vectored thrust drone, you should probably land it before you do this trick.

GETTING DUMPED

No, we don't mean the "let's be friends" conversation—we've all been there, chummer—we mean getting

booted out of something you've jumped into. Riggers can be forcefully ejected from their jumped-in vehicles in three nasty ways. First, if the vehicle is destroyed or bricked, you're dumped. Second, if you're using a commlink or RCC and it gets destroyed or bricked, dump city. Third, if you're plugged into something with a universal connector and your cable gets yanked from either end (ouch), you get dumped.

In all three cases, a dumped rigger suffers dumpshock (p. 229) and loses control of the vehicle (natch). Vehicles with a Pilot Rating will return to autopilot control at the beginning of the next Combat Turn. Vehicles are uncontrolled (see **Control Vehicle**, p. 203) until someone else takes control.

DRONES

Drones are unmanned vehicles intended to be used remotely by riggers or run autonomously. Of course, any vehicle or other machine with a rigger interface can be run remotely by riggers or autonomously, but drones tend to be cheaper, more specialized to their function, and don't need to pay for parking. Still, the rules for drones apply to any remotely controlled or rigged device, but between us chummers let's just say "drone" because it's shorter.

DRONES IN THE MATRIX

Drones are devices, so they show up in the Matrix. This can make them a target for enemy hackers, but it also means you can reach your drone from anywhere on the planet. If you're jumped into a drone, the drone's Matrix icon and your device's icon merge. When jumped into a drone (or any vehicle for that matter) the attacker can only target you (your persona and the device it's on) and not your drone. When you're not jumped in, your drone becomes a valid target once again.

The Device Rating of a drone is the same as its Pilot Rating, meaning all of its Matrix attributes are equal to the Pilot Rating.

PILOT PROGRAMS

Pilots (the programs, not the people) are not bright. They're called "dog-brains" by those who have to work with them, much the same way a particularly thick person might be called a "drone-head" by those who work with him.

A pilot program is specific to the device it's in. You can't just copy a program from one device and move it into a different one. After a week or so, the pilot is so adapted to the specific vehicle, drone, or other device that it's useless in anything else, even other devices of the same model.

Pilots have a Rating indicated by the Device Rating of the vehicle, drone, or other piece of gear they're in. This rating is used in place of any Mental attribute needed for a test, but it hardly makes up for a metahuman brain. When faced with something novel or unexpected, or a complicated command, a Pilot program must make a Device Rating x 2 Test against a threshold set by the gamemaster based on how confusing the situation is. If it fails this test, it blithely continues doing what it was doing before, or simply stops entirely and asks for instructions.

AUTOSOFTS

Autosofts are specialized programs designed to increase the effectiveness of a drone's performance. In other words, people have skills, drones have autosofts. An autosoft is rated between 1 and 6. A drone has a number of slots to use for autosofts and cyberprograms equal to half its Device Rating, rounded up. Swapping autosofts and programs is a Complex Matrix Action.

Here's a short list of autosoft programs. An autosoft with the term [Model] in it means that each copy is for a specific model of drone or vehicle; for example, a Steel Lynx Maneuvering autosoft only works for Steel Lynx drones and is useless in a Nissan Jackrabbit or a Doberman drone.

Clearsight: This acts as the drone's Perception skill.

Electronic Warfare: Exactly like the Electronic Warfare skill.

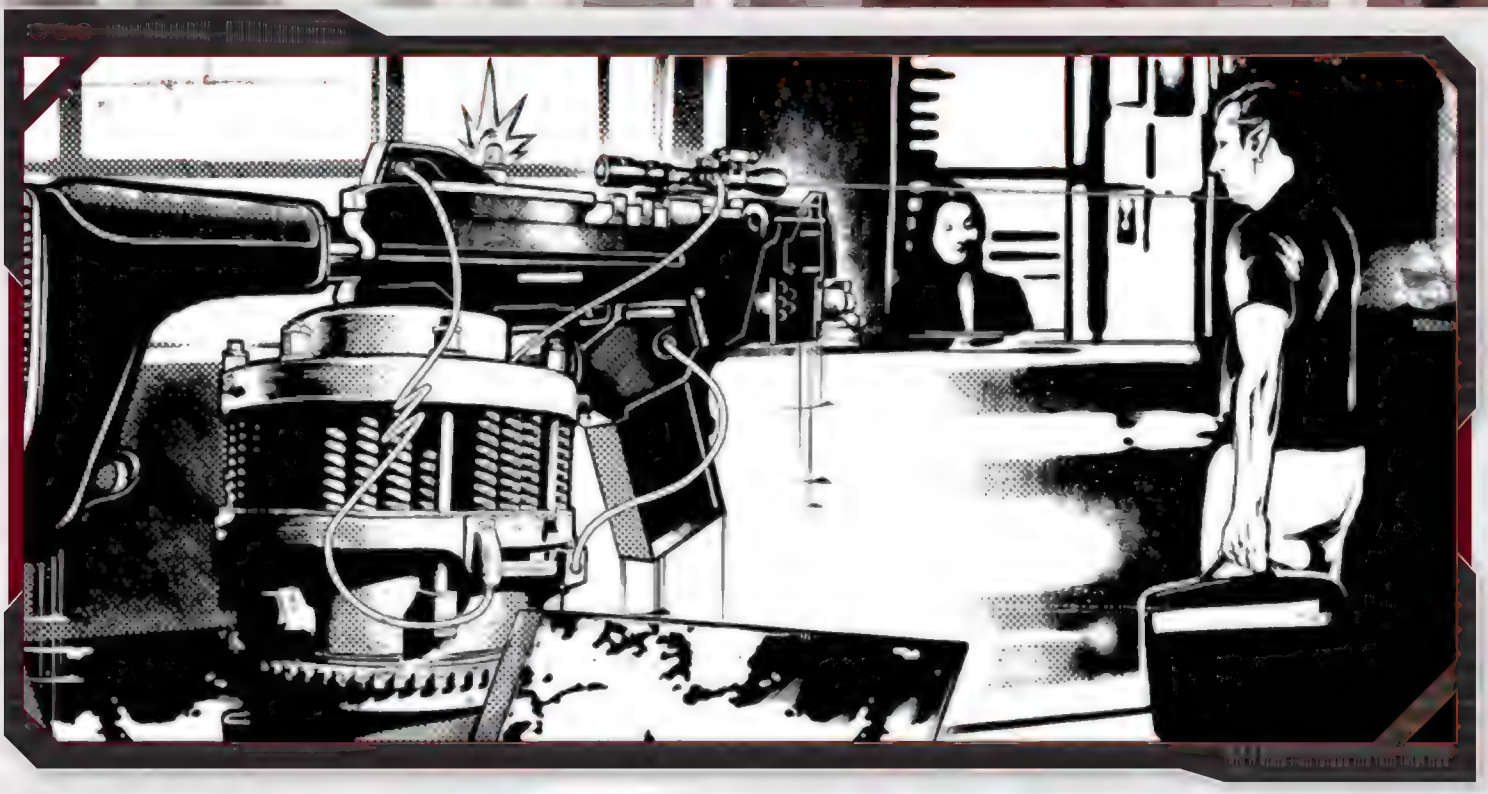
[Model] Evasion: This autosoft teaches the drones autopilot how to avoid being locked onto by Sensors.

[Model] Maneuvering: This is like a Pilot [Vehicle type] skill, except that it only applies to one specific drone model.

RIGGER CYBERPROGRAMS

Riggers can utilize a number of cyberprograms that deckers usually use. Programs purchased for use on an RCC cannot be used in a cyberdeck and vice versa. As with decks, RCCs cannot run more than one type of program of the same type, even if you rename it. Here's a list of handy programs for the savvy rigger and their basic function. See the Programs section of the Matrix chapter (p. 243) for more detail.

Encryption: +1 Firewall
Signal Scrub: Rating 2 noise reduction
Toolbox: + 1 Data Processing
Virtual Machine: 2 extra program slots; take 1 extra box of unresisted Matrix damage when attacked
Armor: +2 dice pool modifier to resist Matrix damage
Biofeedback Filter: +2 dice pool modifier to resist biofeedback damage
Guard: Reduce extra damage from marks by 1 DV per mark
Shell: +1 dice pool modifier against Matrix and biofeedback damage, cumulative with other programs
Sneak: +2 dice pool modifier to defend against Trace User actions
Wrapper: Allows you to defy Matrix iconography rules



[Model] Stealth: This autosoft helps a drone of a specific model operate with as much stealth as possible and acts as the Infiltration skill for the drone.

[Weapon] Targeting: This is the Gunnery skill, but for a weapon of a specific model. If you mount an Ingram Smartgun, you'll need an Ingram Smartgun Targeting autosoft for it.

If a drone is slaved to a rigger command console and isn't running any of its own programs, it uses the programs running on the RCC. This can exceed its normal program limit.

DRONE COMBAT

Rules for drone combat are the same as those for regular flesh-and-blood characters and can be found in the Combat chapter (p. 158). Specific rules for using Gunnery and Sensors in combat can be found there as well (p. 202).

DRONE PERCEPTION

A drone observes its surroundings with a Pilot + Clearsight [Sensor] Test. If you're jumped into the drone, you make a Perception + Intuition [Sensor] Test. Either way, you get to use the drone's entire sensor suite, if it has one.

DRONE INFILTRATION

Drones sometimes need to be sneaky. When this occurs, a few things need to be taken into consideration. When operating independently, drones roll Pilot + Stealth [Handling] vs. Perception + Intuition [Mental]. You might want to put your drone into silent running mode, or its Matrix icon would be a dead giveaway of their presence to anyone scanning the scene in the Matrix. When jumped in, the test is Stealth + Intuition [Handling] vs. Perception + Intuition [Mental]; you probably want your persona operating under silent running while you're at it.

DRONE INITIATIVE

Drones acting autonomously have an Initiative attribute of Pilot Rating x 2, and get 3D6 additional Initiative Dice (for a total of 4D6). When jumped in, the drone uses the VR initiative of the rigger.

REPAIRING DRONES

Drones have two damage tracks, Physical and Matrix. Fill up either one and it's bye-bye birdie as the drone is either irreparably destroyed and joins the spare parts collections, or it gets bricked and it's time to completely rewire its guts. But up until that final box is filled, damage done to a drone can be repaired.

Repairing Physical damage follows the rules for building and repair on p. 145. To repair Matrix damage, check out **Repairing Matrix Damage**, p. 228.

If the chassis *and* the electronics of your drone get trashed, it will probably cost you more to fix it than buy a new one. But if it has sentimental value, ain't it worth it?

EXAMPLE

Driver is chilling out in his modded Eurocar Westwind providing surveillance and overwatch for his team. He's currently jacked into his Maersk Spider Remote Command Console (RCC). He is running Biofeedback Filter, Signal Scrub, and Clearsight autosofts for the Optic-X, rotodrone, and LDSD-41 drones slaved to it, along with the Westwind. He isn't jumped into any of his vehicles at the moment and is instead watching everything in VR. All of his drones and his RCC are running silent but he has left the Eurocar visible on the Matrix so he doesn't look suspicious.

Spike is a decker with a serious grudge against Driver due to a certain disagreement over whether Driver should date his sister. Spike is parked in a nearby alley a mere fifty meters away. He only sees Driver's car and his cheap throwaway commlink on the Matrix in AR, so he jacks into his Renraku Tsurugi and starts scanning the local area. Spike has set his deck configuration for troublemaking (Attack 6, Sleaze 3, Data Processing 5, Firewall 5) and is currently running silent.

Spike performs a Matrix Perception actions, knowing that Driver's RCC and his rotodrone are running silent within 100 meters. He makes a Computer + Intuition [Data Processing] roll, while Driver and his drone make their Logic + Sleaze rolls. Spike gets at least one net it on each icon, locating both devices. He can't find the Optic-X or the LDSD-41 because they're too far away.

Spike's icon pulls out a glowing wedge as he uses his Hack on the Fly action to try to slap a mark on the Rotodrone. Spike would normally roll Hacking + Logic [Sleaze] v. Intuition + Firewall, but the rotodrone is slaved to Driver's RCC and can therefore use the RCC's Firewall instead. Spike succeeds, and the wedge slips into the drone's icon and and then dissolves into a tiny little iridescent bulls-eye emblem. This puts one mark on the rotodrone and a matching one on Driver's RCC, since it's the master device

With no obvious alert, Spike gives it another shot. This time he goes for two marks and taking the –4 penalty. Rolling Hacking + Logic [Sleaze] v. Intuition + Firewall, the rotodrone gets more hits. Wrong move, Spike gets marked. Since the rotodrone is a device, its master Driver gets the mark on Spike and the jig is up.

The gamemaster calls for Initiative to be rolled and we enter Combat Turns.

Initiative Scores are: Spike 23, Driver 19, rotodrone 14

Initiative Pass one starts with Spike on 23. He drops silent running and makes another Hack on the Fly action (Hacking + Logic [Sleaze] v. Intuition + Firewall) against the rotodrone and scores 2 net hits. He now has 2 marks on Driver's persona.

The rotodrone initiates Full Matrix Defense, decreasing its Initiative Score but giving it a bonus equal to its Pilot rating (used in place of Intuition). It doesn't take any action this Action Phase since it has no current commands to follow.

Driver recognizes the icon of Spike that just appeared fifty meters away when the mark hit him, and he knows what this is all about. He uses the Send Message Simple action to command his rotodrone to attack the vehicle Spike is in. His second Simple Action goes to another Send Message action for the Optic-X to lock onto the car and follow it if it gets away.

With a command to follow and having not acted in this Action Phase, the drone swings out of the alley and comes around to attack the car, peppering the car with gel rounds as commanded. No one rolls since the Stun damage does nothing but make a lot of noise and mess up the cosmetics of the car.

The gamemaster drops Initiative Scores by 10 and starts the second Initiative Pass: Spike 13, Driver 9, Rotodrone –6 (it had already lost 10 for its Full Matrix Defense).

Spike doesn't realize he's being shot with gel rounds and uses a Data Spike action on the rotodrone. He rolls Cybercombat + Logic [Attack] v. Intuition + Firewall. As the drone is a slave to Driver, he battles Driver's Intuition and Firewall, plus his Willpower since the rotodrone is using Full Matrix Defense. He scores 4 points of damage on the rotodrone's Matrix monitor.

Driver uses a Simple Action to Send Message and orders the rotodrone to land and reboot. Due to its defensive manuevers, the rotodrone doesn't have an action this pass, so it can't follow its command yet.

Initiative Pass three leaves only Spike with an Action Phase in which he uses Data Spike again, but after rolling poorly, he loses and takes 1 box of Matrix damage as the Firewall bounces bad code back at him.

It's the start of a new Combat Turn, and the new Initiative Scores after rolling are: Spike 17, Driver 21, Rotodrone 22, Optic-X 16.

The rotodrone lands and reboots.

Driver activates the Rating 4 area jammer in his Westwind and uses Send Message to order the LDSD-41 (armed with real bullets, APDS in fact) to line up a shot but await the fire command.

Spike uses Send Message to order his car to get out of there and Check Overwatch Score to see if he's starting to attract attention (the answer is yes). Autopilot on the car joins Initiative, rolls 18 and immediately reduces the total by 10 for the Initiative Pass that has gone by in this Combat Turn, leaving it to act on 8.

LDSD-41 Takes Aim on two Simple Actions.

The second Initiative Pass makes the Initiative scores: Spike 7, Driver 11, rotodrone rebooting, LDSD-41 6, Spike's Americar 8.

Driver uses a Jump into Rigged Device action with the Westwind just in case.

Spike's car rolls out of the alley and starts to drive away, obeying all local traffic regulations.

Spike uses the Control Device action to drive the car and overrides the autopilot as he peels away.

LDSD-41 Takes Aim on two Simple Actions.

The third Initiative Pass (Initiative Scores: Spike –3, Driver 1, Rotodrone rebooting, LDSD-41 –4, Spike's Americar –2) starts and ends with Driver laughing at the car driving away and using Send Message to send a message to Spike that says, "We'll talk later."

At the end of the Combat Turn, the rotodrone completes its reboot and comes back online, free of marks.

A new Combat Turn and the new Initiative Scores are: Spike 24, Driver 23, rotodrone 18, LDSD-41 16, Spike's car 14.

Spike uses a Data Spike action and attacks Driver's RCC. He rolls Cybercombat + Logic [Attack] v. Intuition + Firewall and hits the RCC with 3 boxes of damage.

Driver uses a Send Message action to send Spike a message saying, "Could have been your head! Walk away!!!" and a second Send Message action to order the LDSD-41 to fire.

LDSD-41 fires and nearly disables the car.

Spike uses Send Message to reply, "Peace. See you later."

Driver angrily goes back to being on watch, pissed that he has to deal with his girlfriend's spoiled corp-kid of a brother.

A LITTLE SHADOW MUSIC

After you've experienced a really good concert from the astral plane, things like BTLs and psychedelic drugs don't even ping the radar. Don't ask me how I know this—I'm having a hard enough time maintaining my "good girl" image as it is. Of course, it tends to harsh your concert mellow some when people are trying to blow your head off.

Let me backtrack a little, though, or none of this is going to make any sense.

It surprised the hell out of me when I got the call yesterday from Winterhawk—hadn't heard from him in a couple of years, since a mutual friend put us in touch about a particular esoteric spell I needed to learn in a hurry for a specialized job. Since then, he's occasionally steered work my way. This time it was different, though. For one thing, he wanted to meet astrally at the Grieving Angel, a London club known for its magical security and discretion.

He was already there when I arrived, lounging around being all elegant and insufferable like usual. Guy has an ego the size of Lofwyr—but then again, lots of us magical types do. It's not exactly like I don't put my fairly average-looking-for-an-elf self through the Mental Fabulizer before showing up for my astral close-ups. And hey, at least he'd finally lost the beard.

So, I hear you already wondering, how did I go from catching up with an old friend to tripping out with five hundred or so of my closest chummers and dodging bullets in the middle of an unadvertised, private show by Ian Cinnabar, the latest up-and-coming novahot singer on the mojo-rock scene?

Would you believe His Nibs was too sick to go himself?

Yeah, I didn't either. But it's true: he'd picked up some kind of creeping crud in Egypt or something, and he was too trashed to attend. Hence the astral meet. Did I mention ego? That's a nice way to say he didn't want me seeing him looking like something the devil rats dragged in.

None of this would have been a big deal except that the gig was actually business, not pleasure. Seems some shadowy associate of his had found out about a particular item in the possession of said up-and-coming superstar, and he wanted to get his twitchy little mitts on it before the guy took off on an extended tour of the Far East. Winterhawk figured it would be a cakewalk to get in, boost the item, and get out without anyone being the wiser, but he hadn't counted on the Astral Death Plague laying him low the day before the gig.

So—enter Understudy Alani, stage right.

The show was at a trendy dance club called Cyanotic in Soho. Getting in was easy: I schmoozed my way past the two meatwalls posing as troll bouncers at the door without a glitch, so I guess Winterhawk didn't have any trouble getting the name on the guest list switched at the last minute. I noticed right away that the crowd was almost all Awakened, with a few groggies trying hard to look like they fit in and a couple of droning wastoids strung out on deepweed. That's the thing about the kind of shows that really get magicians' motors running: They're often not much of a thrill for the mundanes. That's why a lot of

BY ROBYN 'RAT' KING

mojo-rock acts go for a mix of the two, so they can at least get part of the crowd on its feet while the other part lolls around in their chairs and does their best imitations of the Sleeping Dead.

Inside, I shifted my perceptions to the astral, and the world blazed bright with auras: everything from the ordered patterns of hermetics with their *trés chic* synthleather jackets and bioluminescent tattoos to the wild dancing brilliance of shamans in techno-tribal garb, and even the strange intensity of what looked like a couple of voodoo houngans hanging out in a corner near the bar nursing oversized drinks with umbrellas in them. Spirits flitted around everywhere, getting off on the vibes as the opening act lit up the room. It wasn't a huge venue—I'd done some legwork earlier today and a decker friend of Winterhawk's had sent over some floorplans so I could plan a quick exit. Basically there was just a small lobby along with the big main floor, the stage area, bathrooms, and some dressing rooms and offices down below.

Oh, and I forgot to mention Freddie.

Freddie was a bound spirit of air 'Hawk probably him along to keep an eye on his investment. Not that I really needed a grumpy elemental following me around and offering critiques of my technique from the safety of the astral plane. "He can help you if you get in a jam," 'Hawk told me. "Least I can do. Just don't send him off to fetch you drinks. He hates that." Oh, and the name? Who knows? He's weird like that. You get used to it.

So yeah—the item. Magicians are always needing reagents for all sorts of magical rituals—conjuring spirits, building items to augment their abilities, even brewing up potions and stuff like that. These reagents can be anything, as long as they go with the right tradition: old wood, bones, jewelry, pieces of buildings, and so on. All they have to be is old enough or exposed to magic enough to make them useful. When you're doing an extra-special ritual, it sometimes calls for extra-special reagents.

According to Winterhawk's associate, it wasn't common knowledge, but Cinnabar had a guitar pick that used to belong to JetBlack. Now, I'm not much of a musical historian, but even *I* recognized that name. Brooding, charismatic star, disappeared young, then people spent decades talking about how he's still alive and in hiding, how there are secret, unreleased recordings out there—that whole kind of thing. If you were a fan, that type of sympathetic energy would contribute some pretty heavy lifting to the right flavor of ritual. Only problem was, Cinnabar took it with him when he toured. He considered it a good-luck charm and liked to keep it near him. Which meant that the only way to get it away from him was during a show, when he usually left it in his dressing room. The only reason I had any kind of shot at getting my hands on it at all was that not many people knew about it—that, and it would only be interesting to two types of people: hardcore JetBlack fans and magicians who were really into music.

The opening act wound down. I joined in the applause as they trooped offstage, then headed over to the bar to grab a drink and

wait for Cinnabar to go on. *Hey, Freddie,* I thought. *Go take a look around and let me know what kind of security they've got around the dressing room. And don't get spotted, okay?*

I could almost see the spirit rolling his eyes. *There's no need to insult me,* his telepathic reply came back. But he did as he was told.

He didn't return until there were signs that the show was about to start. *There are two armed and visibly armored guards who don't seem to be attached to the venue,* he said. *One is inside the dressing room, and the other is outside.*

Visibly armored? Interesting. Usually entertainment types went with a bit more subtle security. I wondered what Cinnabar was afraid of—or whether he'd gotten intel that something was up. Still, that was a lot of security for protecting a guitar pick. *Is the dressing room warded?*

No. Also, the spirit continued in a bored tone, *you didn't ask me about this, but there seems to be rather more of a security presence around the venue than one might expect given its size and exclusivity.*

Curiouser and curiouser. *Thanks, Freddie.*

I live to serve.

The sarcasm made it seem as though a little bit of Winterhawk was right there with me. I figured I'd better lay off asking Freddie for any more favors now, since he only owed me a couple more services, and it wouldn't be fun to have him wink out on me right when I needed him most.

People were gravitating toward the stage, the magical types lounging into comfortable chairs so they could get their astral on as soon as the music started. I found a seat and prepared to do the same for awhile—I figured waiting until Cinnabar got fully into his set would be safer. And besides, there was no way I was going to be at a concert like this and not experience at least *some* of the show. This might be one to tell the grandkids about. Assuming I lived long enough to have any.

Cinnabar lived up to his hype. He and his band launched into their first song, weaving the physical sounds of their instruments with magical vibrations that lit up the astral plane. A really good magical act could manipulate the emotions of the audience like another instrument, and this was a really good magical act. I shifted out of astral for a moment and was amazed to see that they'd even kept the mundanes in mind: mystical figures from beautiful women in flowing gowns to magical critters to a sinuous pint-sized Eastern dragon writhed and danced among the musicians, glowing with arcane energy. I was impressed: That kind of spell was easy to cast but really hard to do well. It was art, plain and simple.

I waited a couple more songs, switching between watching the astral show, the mundane show, and the crowd, and then it was time for my show. Fortunately the bathrooms were in the same general direction as the dressing rooms, so I had an excuse. Not that anyone was paying any attention to me. Off the main floor, down the stairs and past the bathrooms and the "No Guests Beyond This Point" sign, I was already deciding how I wanted to deal with the two guards.

Except that they weren't there. At least the one in the hallway wasn't.

And the door was open.

My neck-hairs started to crawl. I was worried, but hey, if they were going to make this easy for me, I wouldn't complain. I just had to be extra careful in case it was some kind of setup. Fingering a small talisman in my pocket, I muttered a few words and faded into invisibility. If there was anybody else invisible and astrally perceiving in there, they'd see me right away, but I had to take the chance. I'd never gotten around to learning a clairvoyance spell and now I was regretting it.

I spotted one of the guards right away, splayed out on the floor unconscious. The other one was nowhere to be seen. After a quick glance to make sure there wasn't anybody else in the room, I called up a watcher I'd summoned earlier that evening. It shimmered in the air in the form of a sleek ghostly cat. I gave it a description of the small box Winterhawk had described, then kept a nervous eye on the door as it searched the room. I trusted it to find the pick—watchers aren't that bright, but they're good at ferreting out magic.

It leaped onto my shoulder a couple of minutes later. *Sorry, boss. Not here.*

"Well, shit," I said aloud. That meant he had to have it with him—or somebody else had already grabbed it.

That was about as much as I could work through before gunfire and screams cut through the pounding ambient beat and pretty much drove everything else right out of my head.

What the hell–?

I ducked back out into the hallway and closed the door behind me. It wouldn't do to get caught in Ian Cinnabar's dressing room in the middle of whatever this was. Dropping the invisibility spell, I hurried back toward the stage. All my instincts told me that was a very bad idea: I should just get out while I could. But a job was a job, and I knew 'Hawk well enough to know that if I fucked this one up, he'd never send me another one. And this wasn't exactly my first firefight.

It's funny how the general public thinks that all magicians are badass combat spellslingers, ready to fling fireballs and streams of acid and mid-sized vehicles at each other over the smallest disagreement. Truth is, a lot of us don't even know any combat-type spells and wouldn't have the balls to use them if we did. Especially in Britain, where they've elevated bureaucracy to an art form. Why am I telling you this? Because it'll help explain the fact that despite the club being full to bursting with the Awakened, by the time I made it back to the stage area most of them had hit the ground cowering, or were running for the exits and begging not to be shot. The ones who hadn't already been shot or trampled, that is.

Another burst of gunfire erupted from the crowd. Heart pounding, I snatched a fast look at the stage. The synth player was down and writhing. The guitar player was huddled behind a stack of amps, and the drummer crouched low in back of his kit where I could barely see him. But where was Cinnabar? *Freddie–can you find Cinnabar? Is he dead?*

I sensed the spirit moving off to follow my order. The music had stopped, but the crowd's screams, the amp feedback and the shrill shriek of an alarm did a great job of creating a distracting wall of sound. I ducked behind the bar and risked another look around: the two gunmen in the audience

were waving SMGs threateningly in every direction—not firing at the moment, but doing a good job clearing out a big space around them. They wore matching gang jackets and were yelling something I couldn't make out, but I thought I caught the words "fuckin' dandelion eater." Where were all the security guards? The ones who were supposed to be protecting the stage—

It was right about then that the pieces started coming together. The venue security people I'd seen ringing the front of the stage at the beginning of the show were nowhere to be seen now. Either they were all dead, or something a lot bigger than a stolen guitar pick was at stake here.

Freddie's voice poked me in the brain from the astral plane: *Mr. Cinnabar is heading toward his dressing room. With undignified haste.*

I didn't pause for questions—I just took off in that direction. I didn't know if he still had any of his own people here, but if they hustled him off to a car somewhere I'd never have another chance to pull this off. I pounded down the hallway, staying close to the wall and keeping an eye out for any other gunmen, but aside from a few panicked patrons trying to find an exit, I encountered nobody.

I spotted him just as he flung open the dressing room door and slipped inside. Summoning up an invisibility spell again, I slid through right behind him before the door closed.

The place was still empty save for the unconscious ork on the floor. Cinnabar stopped in the middle of the room, bent over, dripping with sweat. I could see his back heaving from his panicked breathing. His leather pants, flowing open coat, and mystical body paint that had looked so dramatic on stage were somehow ridiculous here among the costume racks and plastic cups. His wild-eyed gaze darted from the ork to the closed door as he snatched up his comm from the dressing table. "Galen? Marissa? Anybody?" His voice pitched high, almost shrieking. "Where the fuck are you people? They're fuckin' *shooting* at me!"

And then everything happened at once. If I hadn't been looking in the right direction, I would have been too late to stop it. A flash of movement, and suddenly the "unconscious" ork security guy leaped up, pointed his hands at Cinnabar, and barked out some arcane command.

I acted before I thought. Diving forward, still invisible, I launched myself at Cinnabar's legs and knocked him off his feet. Shifting mental gears I let the invisibility go and replaced it with a barrier that flared up in a shimmering dome around me and the fallen musician. My hands rose and my fists clenched, shaking, as I struggled to maintain the spell against the potent force of the crackling sheet of lightning battering against it. Brilliant light exploded out in all directions, blazing into the dark corners of the small dressing room.

Cinnabar was yelling but I didn't have time to pay attention. I knew I couldn't hold the barrier long—I was pumping a lot of extra power into it, but that kind of effort took its toll fast. Already sweat was beading up on my forehead, and my vision was getting swimmy. The ork let out a roar of rage and changed tactics, making a series of gestures in the air with one hand and pulling out a pistol with the other. This wasn't going to end well if something didn't change soon.

"*Help* me!" I yelled to the cowering Cinnabar. "Frag it, *do* something!"

"He's trying to fucking *kill* me!" he screamed. At least I think that was what it was. At that point he was pretty much incoherent.

Fine, no help there. *Freddie!*

Fortunately Freddie was better in a fight than Cinnabar, and even more fortunately I hadn't used up all his services. The air around the ork whirled and spun, snatching up everything in its vicinity: cups, clothes, boxes, shoes, dust—it was like the guy suddenly had his own personal tornado whizzing around him. Confused, he flung his hands up to fend it off and fired a round into the ceiling, flailing wildly. Then a loud *bang* as the door collapsed off its hinges and the two troll bouncers came storming into the room and piled on top of him. They were the most beautiful sights I'd seen all night—I instantly took back all the unkind thoughts I'd had about them back at the front door. Dropping the barrier but keeping a wary eye out in case the trolls were bluffing, I sank to my knees next to Cinnabar and did my best not to pass out.

I didn't really want to stick around long after that, but Cinnabar asked me to hang out for a few so he could thank me before he let his people hustle him off. I loitered around and listened to his handlers mutter at each other while I waited, and by the time we got to chat I'd picked up most of the story. "So," I told him after he'd expressed his gratitude and I was getting ready to leave, "This whole thing's been fun. Really it has. But do us all a favor, okay? Next time you plan to skip out on your old producer, hire a real shadowrunner to do a proper extraction. Don't just walk off on your own. Pissing off people like that without backup is almost never healthy, scan? And don't forget: You owe me one for this."

I think Winterhawk was pretty surprised when he got the package I sent over the next day. "I heard about what happened, " he said when he called. No vid from his side, I noticed. "It's all over the newsnets. I wouldn't have blamed you if you'd just gotten yourself out of there."

"What, and miss all the fun?" I grinned. "Besides, if I'd left, I wouldn't have had a chance to ask him for his good-luck charm. The one he decided wasn't so lucky after all." My grin widened. "Maybe next time you'll send me something that'll actually be a challenge."

"Be careful what you ask for, " he said. I could hear a faint chuckle in his voice as he broke the connection.

MAGIC

INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of the Sixth World, certain people have been able to connect to a new force of energy, the stuff called mana. This mana is channeled through a person and projected into spells, or used to summon a being from a metaplane, or to improve their physical capabilities beyond metahumanity's normal limits. The people who can manipulate mana are called "Awakened."

As it turns out, the mana that fills the world is a fragile thing, and its presence ebbs with pollution and human misery. Despite mana's ups and downs, metahumanity has learned to harness it and practice extraordinary feats of magic.

Nowadays, there's a social order among the Awakened. At the top of the food chain are second- and third-generation **magicians** (people who can cast spells and/or summon spirits) and **adepts** (people who channel mana into their bodies to perform amazing feats). They've been able to stand on the shoulders of the people who came before them, using magic the same way kids use technology invented in their parents' time—reflexively and intuitively. The knowledge that previous generations struggled to obtain, they simply absorb as quick lessons in their youth. They sometimes have more than a touch of arrogance about them, and sometimes they go to ridiculous lengths to claim a magical heritage for themselves (don't ever get stuck listening to one drone on about how their great-great-great-great-great-great-great grandmother or whatever was burned in Salem as a witch). But they are good at what they do, they have corporations across the world fighting for their services, and they even have their own organizations for people born into "magic families." If they sometimes act as if the world were their plaything, it's because in many ways, it is.

Then you have the mainstream magicians and adepts, magic's equivalent of random lottery winners. One day, often during puberty, they found out that they could make things happen just by thinking about it. They get mad, they glare, and something catches on fire; or they will themselves to incredible feats of physical prowess, leaping over hedges or fences in a single bound, leaving their friends struggling behind.

The newer group of magicians has a caste system of its own—the main divide is between aspected magicians and full magicians. Even though—or possibly because—ninety percent of those given the gift of magic are limited in the ways that they can use it (for example, they can work sorcery only or enchanting only), those who are full magicians believe they are superior to aspected magicians, though it's not like those in the latter group are terribly limited.

Where the ability came from and how they got it is anyone's guess (though several megacorporations are racing to figure out how to intentionally cause someone to Awaken). This group can now have their pick of jobs with corporations—or they can hit the streets and walk around with large targets on their back, thanks to the "geek the mage first" policy every shadowrunner has heard about. Cashing in on the cushy life seems like a no-brainer, but some mages end up on the street anyway. Maybe they've got a bad temper or a criminal record, so corporations don't want to take a risk on them. Maybe they pissed off the wrong people. Or maybe, despite all the pressures of the world, they've managed to hold on to a shred of their integrity and are not ready to sell out. Yet.

All of the Awakened, regardless of their talent level or parentage, have access to the considerable infrastructure of magical industry that has been built over the decades. Curio shops and alchemy stores filled with items of magical interest cater to mages and shamans, carrying competing corporate brand names like Alchemix and Ming Solutions.

Among the items they sell are reagents, small items that carry magical energy and are the magical equivalent of duct tape—useful in just about any situation. They can be used for temporary lodges, spellcasting aids, rit-

CORPORATE LORE STORES AND TALISMONGERS

- **Ipsissimus** (Mitsuhama)
- **MageWerks** (Aztechnology)
- **Pentacles** (Ares)
- **Lore Stores, Inc.** (Shiawase)
- **Yin and Yang** (Wuxing)
- **Pentagrams** (Manadyne)

uals, even banishing pesky spirits if you have the right combination of ingredients.

What has remained the same, even after all this time, is the public's ignorance of magic. They're less nervous about magic than they've been in the past, thanks to the desensitizing effects of newsworthy (and, on one occasion, electable) dragons, spirits, fictional and documentary trids, and even ads featuring or catering to mages, but their understanding of how magic works is still very limited.

While magicians and adepts have caught the public's imagination, they've also gotten the attention of the world's various governments and corporate rule-makers, leading to a whole host of regulations covering the use of magic. Anyone with magic ability is supposed to list the fact that they are Awakened on their SINs, and generally they need to possess a license to practice magic as well as a permit for possession of "magic-related paraphernalia." Guilds have to register to be legal, which means they have to prove that all their members are legal magicians. Without registration, they're subject to being raided at any time by Awakened cops on astral patrol, looking for any gathering of Awakened people that may not be authorized. The authorities seem to think that any unapproved discussion between magicians will eventually lead to chaos and/or destruction. They are not entirely wrong.

Most jurisdictions require a license to sell magical goods—maybe just to squeeze out the little independent alchemist—and they throw down a hefty fine on merchants who sell goods to someone who doesn't have the right permits or, spirits forbid, no SIN. Some corporations and governments take their regulation of magic to extreme levels, requiring the Awakened not only to register but also to provide a tissue sample. This means magicians and adepts can be tracked down if they step out of line, or do anything that pisses off the authorities.

So maybe your offense is casting a Clout spell at a Lone Star officer who was annoying you, or maybe it's just not casting a spell when The Man snapped his fingers. Corps see Awakened people as just another resource to exploit. They try to entice magicians to work for them in exchange for a magical education, a better lifestyle, and even a corporate SIN. They're called "wage mages," and while it's not a kind term, a lot of magicians see it as being better than the limited alternatives sitting in front of them.

There are plenty of Awakened who say "Screw that!" and work in the shadows instead. Who wants some ignorant mundane bureaucrat trying to time-manage a ritual? Why should you have to fill out eight forms simply to justify the purchase of frog eyes? Why shouldn't you be able to climb down the side of a building instead of taking the elevator? The corps may have the benefit of being storehouses of magical knowledge, but just because they know stuff doesn't mean that they're going to share. On the streets, things are rough, though for the most part, systems work as you'd expect. Need reagents? Do your legwork, track them down, and either find them yourself or get them in a trade. Want to cast a ritual? You don't have to wait for the higher-ups' approval. You're only limited by your own resourcefulness, stubbornness, and courage. If you're tenacious enough to find more than you need, you're in luck—the shadows are full of potential buyers.

Magic is plenty useful on a run, whether the magician is putting up a shield to deflect bullets or other spells, or concealing the sights and sounds of what a group of runners is doing so they can go about their business undisturbed. Adepts come in handy, too, either launching their bodies into impossible feats or bringing supernatural levels of charm into play. This doesn't come with the same pressure the corps might level on you—instead, you get a completely different range of problems, from the gangs wanting a piece of you to the snipers looking to take you out with a single shot before you can do some serious damage. Then there's law enforcement. The law is well aware that there are Awakened crooks out there, and they have plenty of means at their disposal to deal with them, including specially designed restraints, hoods to prevent them from establishing line of sight so they can cast a spell, and detention rooms treated with substances that inhibit sorcery and conjuring.

The worst part of it is that the authorities have a good reason to be worried about magic, as some spellslingers and adepts are doing some pretty nasty drek. The legal term for illegal magic is **maleficium,** and it can get pretty ugly. From toxic magic that summons spirits from the bubbling filth of the most polluted corners of the Sixth World to blood magic where casters drain an unsuspect-

ing victim to add power to their spells, magic can go to some twisted places. Most of these practices have an impact on the practitioner, twisting their brains until they are as warped as the magical effects they create. Then they generally either become tyrants of their own small domains or get geeked by runner teams coming out to collect the sizable bounties somebody has inevitably put on their heads.

MAGIC BASICS

Here's what you need to know to use magic in *Shadowrun*.

MAGIC

Magic is a special Attribute that measures a character's magical power. Characters do not have a Magic Attribute unless they select one of the priorities that specifically provide one (see the Priority Table, p. 65). Magic has a starting value from 1 to 6 (or 7 with the Exceptional Attribute quality), but you don't have to settle for that limit forever. You can go through a process called **Initiation** (p. 324) that can enhance your abilities. The maximum value of your Magic Attribute (if you have one) is 6 + your Initiation level.

Anything that reduces your Essence also reduces your Magic rating. For every point (or fraction thereof) of Essence lost, both your current Magic Attribute and your maximum Magic Rating are reduced by one. If your Magic is reduced to zero, you can no longer use any skill requiring the Magic attribute, even if your maximum Rating is still greater than zero (but you can still raise the attribute with Karma and then get back to the spellslinging). If your maximum rating falls to zero, you've burned out, losing all magical abilities, including astral perception and projection. You are mundane forever. Burned-out magicians retain all magical skills and knowledge, but they lack the ability to use them. All Magical active skills except for Arcana become Knowledge skills.

MAGICAL SKILLS

There are three categories of magical skills. The three Sorcery skills—Spellcasting, Counterspelling, and Ritual Casting—are what you use to manipulate magic in the form of spells. The three Conjuring skills—Summoning, Binding, and Banishing—let you conjure spirits from beyond astral space to aid or serve you. The Enchanting skills—Alchemy, Artificing, and Disenchanting—allow you to imbue mundane objects with magic on the physical plane.

EXAMPLE

Jimmy Two-Tone, who has a Magic Attribute of 4 and a maximum rating of 6, has decided he can't live without some cybereyes. To keep the Essence loss low, he selects the Rating 1 model, which costs 0.2 Essence. His Essence is reduced to 5.8, his current Magic Attribute becomes 3, and his maximum Magic rating is now 5. He can get some more cyberware if he wants, as Essence reductions do not reduce his Magic rating again until his Essence drops below 5.

FORCE

Almost everything magical has an attribute known as Force, including spirits, spells, foci, and more. This attribute is a measure of magical power of the object or being. Force is used as a limit for magical effects performed without the channeling benefits of reagents or foci.

INHERENT LIMIT: ASTRAL

If you're going to go messing about in astral space, you need a strong mind, because that's what's going to be doing all your heavy lifting once you leave your body behind. Your mind is both your best muscle and your basic limiter in the astral. Your Astral limit is equal to your Mental or Social limit, whichever is greater.

DRAIN

Drain is the price you pay for wielding awesome magical power. The manipulation of mana, whether forming of a spell, brewing a potion, or bringing forth a being from another plane, can exhaust or injure you. Mana is a form of energy, and channeling greater quantities of that energy can strain the body and mind. This effect is referred to as Drain. Magical actions that cause Drain have a Drain Value, which is a measure of how much Drain they inflict.

The base Drain Value for Sorcery and Enchanting tests is listed with the appropriate spell, ritual, or preparation description. For Conjuring tests, the Drain Value is twice the hits (not net hits) generated by the spirit when it resists the Conjuring attempt. Drain generally is inflicted on you as Stun damage, though there are situations in which it can be Physical damage (see the Sorcery, Conjuring, and Enchanting sections). You resist the damage from Drain through a Drain Resistance Test; each hit reduces the Drain by one. Any remaining Drain is applied as boxes of damage to your Stun (or Physical) Condition Monitor. Drain damage, regardless of whether it is Stun or Physical damage, cannot be healed by any means other than the natural properties of the body—that means no magical healing and no medkits. If you overdo it, you'll simply need to make time for some rest.

POWER POINTS

Power Points are the quantified *qi* energy that adepts can spend to buy permanent powers. At character cre-

ation, adepts receive Power Points equal to their Magic attribute, while mystic adepts have to buy Power Points with Karma. Subsequently, Power Points can come in two ways. If you're an adept, you get a free Power Point whenever you increase your Magic attribute (though this doesn't apply to mystic adepts), and you can gain a Power Point through **Initiation** (p. 324) instead of gaining a metamagic. For adepts, losing Essence is doubly dangerous because every time your Magic attribute is reduced, you lose an equal number of Power Points (you have to "un-buy" powers to make up the loss). If your Magic attribute is reduced to 0, you are cut off from magic and can no longer access your mystic abilities—which would be a good time for you to avoid anyone you've pissed off in the past while you're trying to learn some new skills.

TRADITIONS

A magical tradition describes how you interact with mana. Sure, you don't necessarily need things like chants, elegant hand gestures, muttered curses, and a holistic philosophy to sling spells and summon spirits, but it sure helps you connect to the magic, and your tradition gives you exactly that. Often, when looking for ways to focus, people fall back on elements of their culture or background that they associate with magic. If you spend your whole life thinking that magic happens when you wave a small wand, having such a wand in your hand helps you focus your abilities. Or maybe you've been told that magic can be contained in a beaded necklace—in that case, holding and fingering such a necklace is precisely what you need. All magicians are members of one of the magical traditions.

There are many different magic traditions in the Sixth World, and we have two of them for you here. The hermetic tradition values a scholarly, logical approach to spellcasting. Shamanic magic is looser, wilder, and can gain strength from the magician's personality. Followers of the hermetic tradition are called mages, while followers of the shamanic tradition are called shamans.

Different aspects of the world (the elements) are important to traditions in different ways—the description of each tradition describes how each element lines up with the different types of spells, reagents, and spirits in their thinking, indicating which types of spirits and spirit powers they might be likely to call upon in particular situations. Each tradition's description also includes the Attributes used in the Drain Resistance Test for spellcasters of this tradition.

THE HERMETIC MAGE

The hermetic mage relies on logic, practice, and execution of a planned formula rather than intuition and improvisation to effectively cast spells. They have learned to control magic and believe that the universe (both the magical parts and the mundane) follows patterns of energy that can be manipulated through complex symbols, formulae, and arcane knowledge of its components. This tradition was widely practiced (if not effective) even before the Awakening, and this form appealed early on to corporations and governments due to its intellectual, formalized nature. In hermetic thinking, casting magic involves imposing the magician's will on the universe—so you can imagine some of the egos that emerge when mages get together. Mages are scholars and often have libraries of magical information from which they design spells. Any mage worth his reagents has at least a digital copy of one of the founding texts on hermeticism (rich mages have a fancy hard copy written and bound by hand in a very fancy ceremony). Hermetic trappings also include deluxe, well-crafted equipment in archaic laboratories where mages can create preparations and carry out their research.

Mages create circles of power (they're really just magical lodges, just with a hermetic twist, but don't try to tell a mage that). Hermetic reagents include minerals, ores, and other elements—a knowledge of geology, parageology, and chemistry help them find where to gather such reagents. In urban areas, items found in the esoteric, antique, and forgotten corners of the cities can be used by mages. Older buildings, graveyards, and antique shops may have pieces of brick, pottery, glass, wrought iron, and jewelry that have been imbued with magical properties of the elements. Knowledge of architecture and antiques help in the search for these reagents.

Mages, unsurprisingly, take a somewhat arrogant view on conjuring. The mage tends to believe that spirits are intelligent but inferior beings predestined for servitude. With that mindset, mages tend to be more comfortable binding spirits than are spellcasters of other traditions.

HERMETIC TRADITION

Combat: Fire
Health: Man
Manipulation: Earth
Detection: Air
Illusion: Water
Drain: Logic + Willpower

THE SHAMAN

The shaman uses mana to balance the world of nature and their own will. They believe in harmony and guidance, observing the world and using emotion to weave magic. They respect the gift of magic that connects them to the flow of the spirit of life. To the shaman, the earth is a living being, and her children are spirits who guide and aid those that support her; spirits of the sky,

SHAMANIC TRADITION

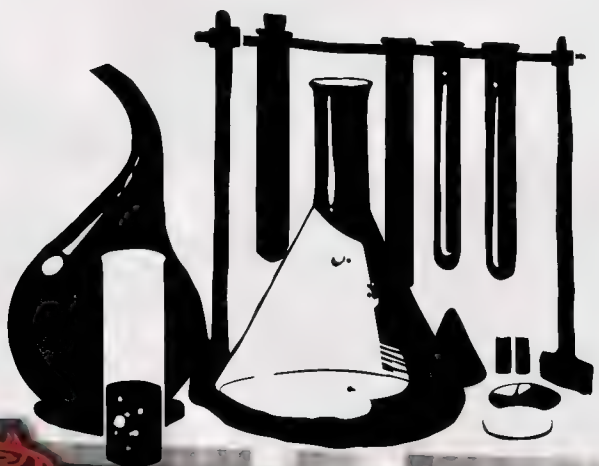
Combat: Beasts
Health: Earth
Manipulation: Man
Detection: Water
Illusion: Air
Drain: Charisma + Willpower

mountain, birds, rats, even metahumanity. Shamanism has been practiced far longer than hermetic magic and can be found in all parts of the world, although it wasn't taken seriously by modern metahumanity until the Great Ghost Dance. To the shaman, casting a spell is asking a greater universal entity, such as a mentor spirit, to grant her power.

Shamans call their magical lodges "medicine lodges." A medicine lodge (also known as a sweat lodge, inipi, kiva, temazcal, or a number of other names) can take a variety of forms, including a small domed hut with an animal skin roof or a hole dug into the ground and carefully covered with a ceiling of woven branches, or in an urban area a small room filled with skins, painting, and artistically decorative urban junk.

The wilderness is an excellent place for shamans to gather reagents, finding plant and animal parts, naturally shaped stones, and vials of water in such pristine locations. Knowledge of zoology, parazoology, botany, and parabotany help them find and harvest these materials. In urban areas, shamans find that the spirit of life also inhabits in the cities. So-called "street shamans" find reagents in urban animals, naturally worn stones in parks or waterways, and handcrafted jewelry made with natural materials. Knowledge of architecture and crafts helps find this sort of reagent.

The shamanic perspective on conjuring is based on a belief that spirits are intelligent and ancient, and they should be treated with the respect one would show an elder. Due to their belief that spirits are everywhere, shamans frequently summon spirits from the area when the need arises, rather than binding spirits for long periods. Shamans often develop personal connections to spirits, following them as they learn magic.



MAGICAL LODGES

A **magical lodge** is a stationary collection of symbols, writings, tools, fetishes, and other mystical materials that helps spellcasters record their lore, expand their talent, and practice magic. It's a basic tool of magicians across the world, about the size of a room. You need it to learn spells, perform rituals, craft foci, and in a pinch you can use it to protect yourself from magical threats. Each lodge is of a specific tradition—a shamanic lodge is intended for shamans, and a hermetic lodge for mages.

Magical lodges don't always look like lodges *per se*. A shamanic lodge is a traditional medicine lodge, but a hermetic magician's lodge is a series of magic circles, shelves filled with arcane tomes, mystical mechanisms, and alchemical apparatuses. Every tradition has its own version of a magical lodge, but they all work the same way.

Magical lodges aren't intended to be portable (although you can make a temporary one with reagents, p. 316). To create your own, you need magical lodge materials (they cost Force x 500 nuyen) that are appropriate to your tradition. Once you have the materials, find a space to put it, like your apartment, or a cave in the wilderness, or a secret abandoned sewer tunnel—someplace you won't mind spending some time. Then spend a number of days equal to the lodge's Force dedicating the space, setting up the physical components, building its astral form, setting up barriers, and harmonizing it to your aura. Once you're done, your magical lodge is up and active. An active magical lodge acts as a mana barrier (p. 315) and shares your astral signature.

If you want to move your lodge, you'll need a day to take it down, turning it back into magical lodge materials; then you can set it up again somewhere else. If you want to improve your lodge, just bring in more materials to add to the current ones and spend a day times the Force you want the lodge to have at the end of your work.

PERCEIVING MAGIC

Magic is rarely subtle. Any form of magic (conjuring, spellcasting, enchanting, magical lodges, spirits, etc.) changes the world around it. Sometimes it's obvious through a magician's gestures or incantations (magicians seen by non-Awakened people are sometimes called "twitchy fingers"). Spirits sometimes cause the air to shimmer, even from astral space. People have reported feeling chills, dread, or other unnatural sensations they can't quite put their finger on when magic is in the area.

Noticing magic is a Simple Perception + Intuition [Mental] Test with a threshold equal to the Skill Rating of the being performing it minus the Force of the magic, or 6 - Force if there's no skill involved (minimum 1 in either case). For example, if a magician with Spellcasting 6 casts

a Force 4 manabolt, the threshold for spotting her do it is 2 (Skill Rating 6 – Force 4). If you just stepped through a Force 5 ward, the threshold to notice the markings or feel the tingle is 1 (6 – Force 5). You get a + 2 dice pool modifier on this test if you have any magic-related Active or Knowledge Skill.

Obviously, if a magician is throwing fire from his fingertips, you're probably going to notice without making a test. But if the magic is subtle, then you have to pick up some dice.

SORCERY

Sorcery is the art of shaping mana to create specific effects. You can use it to cast spells (Spellcasting and Ritual Spellcasting), or protect against or destroy spells (Counterspelling). You only have to concentrate to cast a spell, but your tradition probably has plenty of chanting, gestures, dancing, and other things to go along with it. All traditions cast spells using the same rules.

SPELLCASTING

Spellcasting is the art of channeling mana through force of will, turning it into an astral or physical form called a spell. Before casting a spell, you have to learn it (**Learning Spells,** p. 299). Casting a spell involves the following steps:

STEP 1: CHOOSE SPELL

At character creation, magicians purchase a set of spells for spellcasting, then add more as they advance. The magician can only choose from this set of spells.

Casting Multiple Spells: Some magicians have the mental discipline to weave multiple threads of mana into various spells at once. You can attempt to cast multiple spells simultaneously in the same action, even at different targets. To do this, you have to split your Spellcasting + Magic dice pool between the spells you want to cast (see Step 4), with a minimum of 1 die per spell. Since the modifiers per spell may be different, they are applied after you split the dice pool. The number of spells you can cast simultaneously is limited to your Magic attribute.

STEP 2: CHOOSE THE TARGET

The next thing you must do is choose target(s). You need to be able to establish a link with your target—depending on the spell, you'll need to be able to see or touch the target in order to establish the mystical link.

If you need to see the target, line of sight can be established with your natural vision, including using reflective surfaces and looking through transparent objects. Cyber- or bioware visual enhancements that have been paid for with Essence count as natural. Any technological visual aid that digitizes or augments the visual input for you (a camera, electronic binoculars, Matrix feeds, etc.) doesn't work—you're looking at a generated image, not the light from the real target. Spellcasting by visual targeting is subject to normal visibility modifiers. You can use visual targeting to target astral targets when you're in astral space (you're not technically seeing them, but the analogy works).

Some spells can only be cast on targets that you're touching. You don't need to see these targets, but you might need to make an unarmed attack to make contact with an unwilling target. Touching a target through clothing, armor, or a layer of paint is acceptable.

A magician in the physical world can only cast spells on targets that are in the physical world. Similarly, a magician in astral space can only cast spells on targets that are present in astral space (though auras of things in the physical world can be seen, auras alone cannot be targeted). If you're using astral perception (or you are otherwise dual-natured), you can cast spells on targets in either the physical world or astral plane. Only mana-based spells work in astral space, even if you're in the physical world astrally perceiving the target.

Area Spells: Area spells can be cast on a specific target or a point in space that you can see. Unless noted in a spell, the area of the spell is a sphere centered on the target with a radius in meters equal to the Force of the spell. All targets in the area of effect that you can see, friend and foe alike, are valid targets for the spell. If a potential target is outside your vision (behind a screen, for example), they're not affected.

STEP 3: CHOOSE SPELL FORCE

You must declare the Force at which to cast the spell. The Force acts as a limit on the spell. Higher Force spells are more powerful, but cause more Drain. You can cast a spell at a Force up to twice your Magic rating. If the number of hits (not net hits) you get *after applying the limit* exceeds your Magic rating, the spell's Drain is Physical instead of Stun damage.

STEP 4: CAST SPELL

Casting a spell involves some mental preparation and a Complex Action. Make a Spellcasting + Magic [Force] Test, including dice pool modifiers for injury, sustained spells, and so on. Any opposition roll or threshold you need to reach is listed in the spell description. If the number of hits (not net hits) you get (after applying the limit or Edge spending) exceeds your Magic rating, the spell's Drain is Physical instead of Stun damage.

Reckless Spellcasting: You can bypass some of the preparation, but it can take a toll on your body. This action is called Reckless Spellcasting; it lets you cast a spell as a Simple Action instead of a Complex Action, but with an added +3 Drain Value. If you decide to cast two spells as Simple Actions in the same Action Phase, both receive the +3 Drain Value.

STEP 5: DETERMINE EFFECT

Details on the type of spell are listed under each spell. Some spells require an Opposed Test prior to resolution, while others can possibly be dodged by the target. Note that this is Step 5, and Drain is Step 6—the effect of the spell happens even if Drain takes you out.

STEP 6: RESIST DRAIN

Drain calculation is listed for each spell; the Drain Value is determined using the Force and the listed calculation, but can never be lower than 2. After casting a spell, you must resist Drain using the dice pool for Drain Resistance according to your tradition. Remember that if the number of hits you rolled when casting the spell (Step 4) exceeds your Magic rating, then the Drain causes Physical instead of Stun damage.

STEP 7: DETERMINE ONGOING EFFECTS

If you sustain the spell (that is, if you want the effect of a Sustained spell to continue), you take a -2 dice pool penalty to all tests while it is sustained. You can sustain multiple spells, but the -2 penalty is cumulative for each spell.

Area effect spells that are sustained can be moved as a Complex Action, provided that the spell area is in the magician's line of sight. Characters that drop out of the affected area are no longer affected by the spell, while characters that are enveloped by the new affected area must defend against the spell accordingly.

GLITCHES

A glitch on a spell might cause extra drain (generally a +2 Drain Value), invoke a different elemental effect than what was intended, hit the wrong target, or any other bit of mischief your gamemaster can think up. On a critical glitch, the spell could get away from you and cause all sorts of havoc, or you might not get to resist Drain, or it could go off in an unconventional and unpredictable manner that could harm you or your team—again, your gamemaster gets to decide what happens.

PHYSICAL VS. MANA

Physical spells: When using Physical spells, the magician converts the channeled mana to energy and/or tangible material in the physical world. The tangible material is simple—energy or matter such as ice, acid, oxygen, heat, light, etc. This material is also temporary unless sustained, converting back to mana energy when the spell ends. Physical spells can affect both living and non-living objects in the physical world.

Mana spells: When using mana spells, the magician can only affect living things with auras or astrally active entities (such as spirits or foci) even in the physical world. Mana spells can affect targets on either the physical or astral planes, but only if you're on the same plane as your target(s).

SPELL CHARACTERISTICS

Each spell is described with a set of characteristics. Here's a rundown of those categories and what the different abbreviations accompanying them mean.

Type: Spells are either Physical spells (P) or Mana spells (M). For a full discussion of the difference between the two, see the **Physical vs. Mana sidebar** (below).

Range: This describes how close you have to get, or how far away you can be, to cast the spell. The most common range is Line of Sight (LOS), meaning you have to physically see the target (described in Step 2 of spellcasting, p. 281). Some spells require you to Touch (T) the target—if the target is unwilling, you'll need to make an unarmed attack against the target (see **Accuracy**, p. 168).

Some spells are Area spells, affecting an area rather than a single target. These spells are noted with (A) after the range designation. With a few exceptions, the area is a radius in meters equal to the Force of the spell.

Damage: If the spell inflicts damage, this describes the type—either Physical (P) or Stun (S). The Damage Value for the spell is listed in the spell or spell category description.

SPELL CATEGORIES

Combat spells: These spells are quick, dirty, and violent. The energy of the spell is used to harm, maim, or otherwise frag the target. Spell energy may be channeled directly into the target, damaging it from within, or it may generate external energy to damage the target from the outside.

Detection spells: These spells enhance the senses. They allow the subject of the spell to see or hear over great distances, or grant new sensory abilities. There are also Detection spells to sense the presence of other beings, magic, life, and/or enemies.

Health spells: These spells affect the condition and performance of a living body. They can be used to treat or heal injuries, purge poisons or toxins, and increase or decrease Attributes.

Illusion spells: These spells can mess with a target's perception. They can be used to deceive, make things invisible, confuse the senses, or provide simple or complex entertainments.

Manipulation spells: These spells are used by magicians to alter and shape their environment in a variety of ways. Manipulation spells can control the emotions or actions of a person, move objects, shape, create, or channel energy, or change a target's form or appearance by altering its structure.

Duration: This describes how long the spell's effect lasts. Instantaneous (I) spells have an effect that happens and then fades, while Sustained (S) spells last as long as you keep them going. Permanent (P) spells don't fade or dissipate; their effect becomes a lasting, non-magical characteristic after you sustain the spell for (Force) Combat Turns.

Drain: This is the formula used to calculate the Drain Value inflicted by a spell. It is based on the Force (F) of the spell and can never be below 2.

Some spells have keywords listed in parentheses. These keywords are explained in the description of the spell category.

COMBAT SPELLS

Combat spells use mana to create damaging effects, either by direct or indirect means. They're a mana-slinger's guns, and are treated that way by law enforcement.

Direct: When your direct combat spell is successfully cast, it inflicts a number of boxes of damage equal to your net hits on the opposed test. The opposed test generally pits your Spellcasting + Magic [Force] against either Body (for physical spells) or Willpower (for mana spells). The target does not get to resist the damage, only the Spellcasting test.

Indirect: All indirect combat spells originate near the magician's body (most magicians use their hands or eyes, but some use their feet for "power kicks" or emanate power from the entire body for a kind of an aura-throwing effect). The spell then is launched with an Opposed Test that pits the magician's Spellcasting + Magic [Force] versus the target's Reaction + Intuition, kind of like shooting a gun (in this case with bullets made of acid, or fire, or something equally unpleasant to be hit by). So you don't really need to be able to see the target—you can cast these spells blindfolded or with artificial image enhancement—as long as you've got a clear line of fire. The Damage Value of a successful indirect combat spell is Force + net hits, with an AP equal to -(Force). Damage from an indirect combat spell is resisted with Body + Armor (adjusted for the spell's AP). Area indirect spells travel from the magician to the point of detonation and then go boom. The test is like that for grenades (p. 181): a Spellcasting + Magic [Force] (3) Test with scatter of 2D6 meters. Unlike grenades, you get to add your net hits on this test to the Damage Value of the spell, but only if you beat the threshold; otherwise the spell still detonates, but the hits are used to reduce scatter by one meter per hit..

Elemental: These spells cause extra damage (**Special Damage Types**, p. 170). The specific type is listed in the spell description.

ACID STREAM
(INDIRECT, ELEMENTAL)

Type: P **Range:** LOS **Damage:** P
Duration: I **Drain:** F - 3

EXAMPLE

One of the gangers has cornered Rikki the Rat Shaman, so Rikki has no choice but to throw down some mojo on him. Since there's only one, he casts Mana Bolt at Force 4. With Magic 5 and Spellcasting 4, Rikki gets 4 hits while the ganger with his Willpower 3 manages to get 1 hit. This means that the ganger takes 3 points of Stun damage (equal to Rikki's net hits since this is a Direct Combat spell). The ganger gets no resistance and no dodge.

The second ganger has caught up with the first, and Rikki must step up his game. Rikki switches to Blast at Force 7. A risky maneuver for, but he wants to end things quickly so he can curl up and hide. He rolls a miraculous 5 hits. This is an Indirect Combat spell, so its damage will be equal to Force 7 + Rikki's net hits. Ganger 1 is a little out of it and only gets 2 hits. The second ganger is quicker with 4 hits. The three net hits make the total damage hitting the first ganger 10, while the second must attempt to absorb 8 points of damage. Both are wearing armor jackets (12), but with such a high Force, the AP of the spell reduces the jacket's protection to 5. Both gangers have Body 5, so they each roll 10 dice to resist damage. Ganger 1 rolls 3 hits and takes a total of 7 boxes of Stun damage. Combined with the Mana Bolt, he is knocked out. Ganger 2 rolls better with 5 hits and only takes 3 boxes of stun. Ganger 2 figures it's not worth taking on Rikki on his own and runs off to get help. Rikki hurts more from casting that spell than from being punched by the gangers, as his nose is bleeding from taking 4 boxes of Stun damage from the drain.

TOXIC WAVE
(INDIRECT, ELEMENTAL)

Type: P **Range:** LOS (A) **Damage:** P
Duration: I **Drain:** F - 1

These spells create a powerful corrosive that sprays the target, causing terrible burns and eating away organic and metallic material—treat it as Acid damage (p. 170), with appropriate effects on the affected area and any objects therein. The acid quickly evaporates, but the damage it inflicts remains. Acid Stream is a single-target spell, Toxic Wave is an area spell.

PUNCH
(INDIRECT)

Type: P **Range:** T **Damage:** S
Duration: I **Drain:** F - 6

CLOUT
(INDIRECT)

Type: P **Range:** LOS **Damage:** S
Duration: I **Drain:** F - 3

BLAST
(INDIRECT)

Type: P **Range:** LOS (A) **Damage:** S
Duration: I **Drain:** F

These spells smack the target(s) with invisible psychokinetic force, similar to a bruising punch, that inflicts Stun damage. Punch requires you to touch the target. Clout affects a single target, while Blast is an area spell.

DEATH TOUCH
(DIRECT)

Type: M **Range:** T **Damage:** P
Duration: I **Drain:** F - 6

MANABOLT
(DIRECT)

Type: M **Range:** LOS **Damage:** P
Duration: I **Drain:** F - 3

MANABALL
(DIRECT)

Type: M **Range:** LOS (A) **Damage:** P
Duration: I **Drain:** F

Death Touch, Manabolt, and Manaball all channel destructive magical power into the target, doing Physical damage. The damage inflicted is similar to massive cellular die off from radiation or necrotizing fasciitis, but without the continuing effects. But still, ick. Since they are mana spells, spells in this group only affect living and magical targets and are resisted with Willpower. Death Touch requires the magician to touch the target. Manabolt affects a single target, Manaball is an area-effect spell.

FLAMETHROWER
(INDIRECT, ELEMENTAL)

Type: P **Range:** LOS **Damage:** P
Duration: I **Drain:** F - 3

FIREBALL
(INDIRECT, ELEMENTAL)

Type: P **Range:** LOS (A) **Damage:** P
Duration: I **Drain:** F - 1

These spells create an explosion of flames that flash into existence and scorch the target(s), giving them the double benefit of causing pain and being intimidating as hell. These spells deal Fire damage (p. 171).These flames burn out after striking the target, but their secondary effects may ignite flammable materials that continue to burn after the spell is exhausted. Flamethrower is a single-target spell, while Fireball is an area spell.

LIGHTNING BOLT
(INDIRECT, ELEMENTAL)

Type: P **Range:** LOS **Damage:** P
Duration: I **Drain:** F - 3

BALL LIGHTNING
(INDIRECT, ELEMENTAL)

Type: P **Range:** LOS (A) **Damage:** P
Duration: I **Drain:** F - 1

These spells create and direct vicious strikes of electricity that cause Electricity damage (p. 170). Lightning Bolt is a single target spell. Ball Lightning is an area spell.

SHATTER
(DIRECT)

Type: P **Range:** T **Damage:** P
Duration: I **Drain:** F - 6

POWERBOLT
(DIRECT)

Type: P **Range:** LOS **Damage:** P
Duration: I **Drain:** F - 3

POWERBALL
(DIRECT)

Type: P **Range:** LOS (A) **Damage:** P
Duration: I **Drain:** F

These spells channel destructive magical power into the targets causing Physical damage. The target is cooked from the inside, like magically microwaving a hot dog. As physical energies, they can affect both living and non-living targets and are resisted by the target's Body. Shatter requires you to touch the target, Powerbolt affects a single target, and Powerball is an area spell.

KNOCKOUT
(DIRECT)

Type: M **Range:** T **Damage:** S
Duration: I **Drain:** F - 6

STUNBOLT
(DIRECT)

Type: M **Range:** LOS **Damage:** S
Duration: I **Drain:** F - 3

STUNBALL
(DIRECT)

Type: M **Range:** LOS (A) **Damage:** S
Duration: I **Drain:** F

These spells channel magical energy directly into the target, causing Stun damage. They are sometimes referred to as "sleep" spells because they can render targets unconscious but keep them alive, in the cases where you'd prefer more polite violence. Knockout requires the magician to touch the target, Stunbolt affects a single target, and Stunball is an area spell.

DETECTION SPELLS

Detection spells give the subject a new sense (beyond the normal five) or improve a sense the subject already has, for as long as they are sustained. Detection spells may be cast upon yourself or on another subject within touch range. The standard range of the sense a Detection spell grants is the spell's Force x caster's Magic in meters as a radius from the target of the spell. Extended-range detection spells have a Force x Magic x 10 meter range. The more net hits you get when casting the spell, the more detailed information you receive.

Using the extra or enhanced sense may require the subject to Observe in Detail as a Simple Action. Detection spells are either directional (like normal sight), area effect (work in all directions at once, like hearing), or psychic (providing some other special sense such as telepathy or precognition).

The sense is either active, requiring special efforts or actions to use, or passive, meaning it enhances the abilities of those affected without them having to take separate actions.

Active: Active detection spells involve an Opposed Test between the caster's Spellcasting + Magic [Force] and either Willpower + Logic (+ Counterspelling if available) [Mental] for living things with auras, (Force x 2) for magical objects, or the object resistance for mundane objects (p. 295). Counterspelling may be used to defend against active detection spells, even if the target is unaware of them being cast (for example, if they walk within range of an active Detect Enemies spell).

When a spell affects multiple targets, either because it has an area effect or because it is sustained and may be encountered by multiple people, you should only make a single Spellcasting Test. Every potential target then makes an individual Spell Resistance Test and compares their result to yours. New targets may be detected as they enter the range of the spell, and they must make a Spell Resistance Test against your original Spellcasting Test.

Passive: A passive sense is simply "on" and feeds sensory input to the subject's brain like other senses—no interpretation necessary. While the spell is sustained, Perception Tests using this sense have a limit equal to the net successes from casting of the spell instead of the subject's Mental limit. Counterspelling cannot be used to defend against a passive sense, but once an opposing spellcaster realizes there is an active sustained spell, she can try dispelling it (see **Dispelling**, p. 295).

Glitches: A glitch on a Detection Spellcasting Test may result in false or misleading information. Likewise, a critical glitch may inflict extra Drain (e.g., +2 Drain Value), translate any Drain damage suffered into Physical Damage, temporarily strip the subject of a sense, or inexplicably apply the intended sense to others (particularly opponents) in range—hopefully they'll remember to thank you for your help in spotting you and your team.

EXAMPLE

Rikki the Rat Shaman (Magic Rating 5) wants to take a look around the club without getting up from his dark corner of the bar. He casts Clairvoyance at Force 4 on himself. This means that he has a second pair of invisible eyes that can move up to 20 meters from his location (Magic 5 x Force 4 = 20). He lets his magical sight move from table to table around the club, occasionally reading what is being displayed on a commlink and doesn't see anything unusual. Because the club is not that big, he sends his eyes to a maximum distance of 20 meters, which is out to the street where there's a familiar face talking with someone through a commlink. The conversation is too short for Rikki to cast Clairaudience and move a pair of ears outside and listen in.

ANALYZE DEVICE
(ACTIVE, DIRECTIONAL)

Type: P **Range:** T
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 3

This spell allows the subject to analyze the purpose and operation of a device or piece of equipment within range of the sense. The casting of the spell is opposed by the object's resistance (p. 295). Each net hit can be used to provide a piece of information about the device that would not be readily apparent (for example, it would not give the information that it is a Renraku-manufactured device if the thing is emblazoned with a huge Renraku logo, but it might say what the basic function of the thing is). Each net hit also gives the subject a bonus die while operating the device and allows the subject to ignore any skill-defaulting modifiers for using it as long as the spell is sustained.

ANALYZE MAGIC
(ACTIVE, DIRECTIONAL)

Type: P **Range:** T
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 3

This spell allows the subject to analyze the purpose of a magical object (e.g., foci, alchemical preparations, magical lodges, active rituals). Treat the net hits from the Spellcasting Test as hits on the Assensing Table (p. 313), except the subject isn't required to be perceiving astrally.

ANALYZE TRUTH
(ACTIVE, DIRECTIONAL)

Type: M **Range:** T
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 2

The subject can tell whether a target's statements are the truth (or at least if the subject honestly believes them to be true).The spell needs at least 1 net hit to determine validity of a selected statement. The spell does not work on written materials or items recorded through any sort of technological medium. The subject must hear a statement in person (with the target within range) to be able to judge its truth.

DETECTION SPELL RESULTS

NET HITS	RESULTS
1	Only general knowledge, no details
Detect Life example: A group of metahumans.	
2	Major details only, no minor details
Detect Life example: A dwarf, a troll, and an ork walk into a bar. Stop me if you heard this one.	
3	Major and minor details, with some minor details obscured or missing
Detect Life example: The three individuals listed above are all armed, and their weapons are out. The troll is leading.	
4	Detailed information
Detect Life example: The troll is your contact, Moira; you don't believe you've ever met the other two.	

CLAIRAUDIENCE
(PASSIVE, DIRECTIONAL)

Type: M **Range:** T
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 3

The subject can hear distant sounds as if physically present at a chosen point within the sensory range of the spell. The listening point may be moved to any other point within range of the spell as a Complex Action. While using Clairaudience, the subject cannot use her normal hearing. This spell doesn't translate visual images, only sounds (and only sounds within the subject's natural range of hearing; augmented hearing does not apply).

CLAIRVOYANCE
(PASSIVE, DIRECTIONAL)

Type: M **Range:** T
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 3

The subject can see distant scenes as if physically present at a chosen point within the sensory range of the spell. The visual point may be moved to any other point within range of the spell as a Complex Action. The subject can't use normal vision or astral perception while using Clairvoyance. This spell doesn't translate sound, only vision, and it doesn't work with augmented vision. You can't target spells through Clairvoyance.

COMBAT SENSE
(PASSIVE, PSYCHIC)

Type: M **Range:** T
Duration: S **Drain:** F

The subject can subconsciously analyze combat and other dangerous situations within range, sensing events a split-second before they happen. Every hit on the Spellcasting Test adds 1 die for Reaction on Surprise Tests, and also to rolls made when defending against ranged and melee attacks as long as the spell remains in effect.

DETECT ENEMIES
(ACTIVE, AREA)

Type: M **Range:** T
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 2

DETECT ENEMIES, EXTENDED
(ACTIVE, EXTENDED AREA)

Type: M **Range:** T
Duration: S **Drain:** F

The subject can detect living targets within range who have hostile intentions toward him. The spell does not detect traps (since they aren't alive), nor can it detect someone about to shoot into a crowd at random (since the hostility is not directed at the subject of the spell). The spell can detect targets preparing an ambush or other surprise attack directed at the subject.

DETECT INDIVIDUAL
(ACTIVE, AREA)

Type: M **Range:** T
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 3

The subject can detect the presence of a particular individual anywhere within range of the sense. You need to specify the individual during casting, someone you know or at least have met in the past.

DETECT LIFE
(ACTIVE, AREA)

Type: M **Range:** T
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 3

DETECT LIFE, EXTENDED
(ACTIVE, EXTENDED AREA)

Type: M **Range:** T
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 1

The subject detects all living beings (but not spirits) within range of the sense and knows their number and

relative location. In a crowded area, the spell is virtually useless, picking up a blurred mass of traces of life.

DETECT [LIFE FORM]
(ACTIVE, AREA)

Type: M **Range:** T
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 2

DETECT [LIFE FORM], EXTENDED
(ACTIVE, EXTENDED AREA)

Type: M **Range:** T
Duration: S **Drain:** F

The subject detects all of a specified type of life form within the range of the sense and knows their number and relative location. This is actually several different spells that must be learned separately, one for each type of life form that a caster might like to detect (Detect Orks, Detect Elves, Detect Dragons, and so forth), which are learned separately.

DETECT MAGIC
(ACTIVE, AREA)

Type: M **Range:** T
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 2

DETECT MAGIC, EXTENDED
(ACTIVE, EXTENDED AREA)

Type: M **Range:** T
Duration: S **Drain:** F

The subject can detect the presence of all foci, spells, wards, magical lodges, alchemical preparations, active rituals, and spirits within range of the sense. It does not detect Awakened characters or critters, astral signatures, alchemical preparations that that have expired or already triggered, or the effects of permanent spells once they have become permanent.

DETECT [OBJECT]
(ACTIVE, AREA)

Type: P **Range:** T
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 2

The subject detects all of a specified type of object within range of the sense and knows their number and relative location. Each type of object requires a separate spell (Detect Guns, Detect Computers, Detect Explosives, and so forth). These spells must all be learned and cast separately.

MINDLINK
(ACTIVE, PSYCHIC)

Type: M **Range:** T
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 1

Mindlink allows the magician and one voluntary subject to communicate mentally, exchanging conversation, emotions, and mental images. One hit on the Spellcasting Test is enough to establish the link. The subject must remain within range of the magician for the Mindlink to work.

MIND PROBE
(ACTIVE, DIRECTIONAL)

Type: M **Range:** T
Duration: S **Drain:** F

This spell allows the subject to telepathically probe the mind of a specific target within range of the sense (chosen when the spell is cast). The target is aware of the probing, though they may not know the source of the spell. The number of net hits you get on the spell determines what kind of information the subject can read, given on the table. The subject may probe for one piece of information per Complex Action while the spell is sustained. Additional uses of Mind Probe against the same target within a number of hours equal to the target's Willpower inflict a -2 dice pool modifier on the Spellcasting attempt.

MIND PROBE TABLE

NET HITS	RESULTS
1–2	The subject can read the target's surface thoughts only.
3–4	The subject can find out anything the target consciously knows and view the target's recent memories (up to 72 hours).
5+	The subject can probe the target's subconscious, gaining information the target may not even be consciously aware of, like psychological quirks, deep fears, or hidden memories.

HEALTH SPELLS

Health spells can heal physical injury, cure diseases (or inflict symptoms), detoxify poisons or drugs (or mimic their effects), and modify attributes. No techniques currently known to magic can erase Stun damage or cure psychological conditions. All health spells require the magician to physically touch the subject of the spell—this "laying on of hands" is traditional in magical healing lore the world over.

Most health spells are cast with a simple Spellcasting + Magic [Force] Test. Exceptions are listed in the spell descriptions.

Essence: Low-Essence characters are more difficult to affect with some health spells. It's hard to put the

body back into its natural state when that state has been unnaturally altered. In game terms, this means you take a dice pool modifier equal to the target's actual Essence minus his maximum Essence (which will turn out to be 0 or a negative number), rounded up.

ANTIDOTE

Type: M **Range:** T
Duration: P **Drain:** F - 3

This spell helps a poisoned subject overcome a toxin. Casters use it after the target has been poisoned, but before the target needs to make her Toxin Resistance Test, based on the Speed of the toxin. Add the hits from this spell directly to the hits from the Toxin Resistance Test.

CURE DISEASE
(ESSENCE)

Type: M **Range:** T
Duration: P **Drain:** F - 4

This spell is used at any point after infection to help a patient overcome illness. The infected character receives a number of additional dice on her Disease Resistance Test equal to the spell's net hits until the patient recovers (or dies). It does not heal any damage already inflicted by the disease (that requires a separate Healing spell).

DECREASE [ATTRIBUTE]
(ESSENCE)

Type: P **Range:** T
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 2

This spell weakens the target by decreasing a designated Attribute. A version of this spell exists for each Physical and Mental attribute, but not for Special attributes (Initiative, Edge, Essence, Magic, or Resonance). It affects both natural and augmented Attributes.

This spell is cast with an Opposed Spellcasting + Magic [Force] v. (targeted Attribute) + Willpower Test. If the magician wins, the Attribute is reduced by the spell's net hits. If a Physical Attribute is reduced to 0, the victim is incapacitated and paralyzed. If a Mental Attribute is reduced to 0, the victim stands still, mindlessly confused. Decreasing an Attribute also affects any other derived statistics that use it (for example, if Reaction or Intuition is lowered, Initiative is lowered as well) as long as the spell is sustained.

DETOX

Type: M **Range:** T
Duration: P **Drain:** F - 6

Detox relieves the side effects of a drug or poison. The Force of the spell must equal or exceed the toxin's base DV. A single hit is sufficient to eliminate all symptoms. Detox does not heal or prevent damage done by toxins, but it eliminates any side effects they may have on the victim (dizziness, hallucinations, nausea, pain, and so forth). Detox is the hangover cure of choice among those who can afford it.

HEAL
(ESSENCE)

Type: M **Range:** T
Duration: P **Drain:** F - 4

Heal repairs physical injuries. It heals a number of boxes of Physical damage equal to the spell's hits from the Spellcasting Test. Hits can also be used to reduce the base time for the spell to become permanent; each hit spent this way shaves off 1 Combat Turn (you can split hits between healing and reducing time).

Any boxes of Physical damage your target still has after any boxes are healed magically can only be healed by time and rest.

INCREASE [ATTRIBUTE]
(ESSENCE)

Type: P **Range:** T
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 3

This spell increases an Attribute (natural or augmented) on a voluntary subject. A version of this spell exists for each Physical and Mental attribute, but not for Special Attributes (Initiative, Edge, Essence, Magic, or Resonance). The Force of the spell must equal or exceed the (augmented) value of the Attribute being affected. The Attribute is increased by an amount equal to the hits scored, up to the target's augmented maximum (any hits that would increase the Attribute beyond its augmented maximum are ignored). Each Attribute can only be affected by a single Increase Attribute spell at a time.

Note that increasing an Attribute may affect other derived statistics (Increase Reaction also affects Initiative, for example, while Increase Body adds extra boxes to the character's Physical Condition Monitor for as long as the spell lasts).

INCREASE REFLEXES
(ESSENCE)

Type: P **Range:** T
Duration: S **Drain:** F

This spell increases the initiative of a subject. Each hit rolled on the Spellcasting Test adds +1 to the target's Initiative, and every two hits adds one Initiative Die. A character can only be affected by a single Increase Reflexes spell at a time, and the maximum Initiative Dice anyone can have is +5D6.

OXYGENATE

Type: P **Range:** T
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 5

This spell oxygenates the blood of a voluntary subject, providing extra Body dice (1 die for every hit) to re-

sist suffocation, strangulation, the effects of inhaled gas, or any other effect of oxygen deprivation. The spell also allows the subject to breathe underwater.

PROPHYLAXIS

Type: M **Range:** T
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 4

This spell provides an extra die per hit for a subject to resist infection, drugs, or toxins. The spell does not discriminate between harmful and beneficial drugs, so the subject also resists medicines and other helpful drugs while under its effects. Reduce the bonuses of a beneficial drug by 1 for every hit rolled in the casting; three or more hits block effects that do not have a bonus or penalty associated with them.

RESIST PAIN

Type: M **Range:** T
Duration: P **Drain:** F - 4

Resist Pain allows the subject to ignore the pain of injuries, reducing penalties from Physical or Stun damage. Each hit on the Spellcasting Test removes the effect of one box of damage from each of the subject's Condition Monitor tracks. It does not remove the damage itself; it only eliminates the modifiers. If all of the boxes on the track are filled, the character still falls unconscious.

The spell is permanent in that the boost to the patient's endorphin levels does not wear off. If the subject's damage rises above the level at which the patient is resisting pain or if the existing injuries heal, the spell dissipates. A person can only be under the effects of one Resist Pain spell at a time (the one with the most hits).

STABILIZE

Type: M **Range:** T
Duration: P **Drain:** F - 4

When applied to a character with a filled Physical damage track, this spell stabilizes all vital functions and prevents the character from dying. The spell's Force must equal or exceed the overflow damage already taken when the spell starts. The full time must be taken for the spell to become permanent before the character is truly stabilized; hits reduce the time it takes by 1 Combat Turn each. If successful, the spell prevents the character from taking further damage from Physical Damage Overflow (p. 209).

ILLUSION SPELLS

No matter how realistic they are, illusions cannot directly cause physical harm. They can cause distractions, loss of balance or orientation, and even symptoms like nausea or pain. All such effects vanish, though, as soon as the magician drops the illusion. Illusions can certainly cause harm by manipulating the senses so a victim

walks into traffic or off a high building, for example, but they cannot directly cause damage.

Illusions fall into the following categories:

Obvious illusions are used solely for entertainment and cannot fool subjects into believing they are real.

Realistic illusions seem completely real.

Single-sense illusions affect only one sense.

Multi-sense illusions affect all senses.

Mana Illusions: Mana-based Illusion spells affect the mind and are ineffective against technological viewing systems like cameras. Mana illusions are resisted by Logic + Willpower. Some mana illusions affect the target's senses directly; others affect the senses of anyone perceiving the subject of the spell (though you're never affected by your own illusion spell). Though mana-based illusions can be created on the astral plane, their magical auras give them away as illusions to anyone who makes a successful Assensing Test—illusions can't fool Assensing and cannot be used to disguise or create auras.

Physical Illusions: Physical illusion spells create actual images or alter physical properties, such as light or sound. Physical illusions can be used on both living and technological systems. They are resisted by Intuition + Logic; non-living devices resist with their Object Resistance. The magician must generate more hits than the observer for the illusion to be considered real. If the spell is not completely resisted, the target is fully affected by the illusion.

AGONY
(REALISTIC, SINGLE-SENSE)

Type: M **Range:** LOS
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 4

MASS AGONY
(REALISTIC, SINGLE-SENSE)

Type: M **Range:** LOS (A)
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 2

A favorite of mages going through bad break-ups, Agony inflicts an illusion of terrible pain on the target. Each net hit scored by the magician temporarily inflicts 1 box of Physical and 1 box of Stun damage on the target. It is not actual damage, only a measure of the effect of the spell. The target is affected the same as if the damage were real, with the usual injury penalties. If the target's damage boxes are completely filled, he is racked with pain, unable to move or act. Once the spell is ended, the pain and damage boxes immediately go away.

Agony affects a single target, while Mass Agony is an area spell.

BUGS
(REALISTIC, MULTI-SENSE)

Type: M **Range:** LOS
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 3

SWARM
(REALISTIC, MULTI-SENSE)

Type: M **Range:** LOS (A)
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 1

These spells make the target believe that small bugs of various persuasions are crawling over their entire body, biting them, scurrying about, and crawling into assorted orifices. The bugs look, feel, smell, and even taste real. The illusion is usually enough to make any target who fails to resist freak out. For each net hit you get, the target loses 2 from their Initiative Score. If you sustain the spell, they lose the same amount from their Initiative Score at the beginning of each Combat Turn.

Bugs affects a single target, Swarm is an area spell.

CONFUSION
(REALISTIC, MULTI-SENSE)

Type: M **Range:** LOS
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 3

MASS CONFUSION
(REALISTIC, MULTI-SENSE, AREA)

Type: M **Range:** LOS (A)
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 1

CHAOS
(REALISTIC, MULTI-SENSE)

Type: P **Range:** LOS
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 2

CHAOTIC WORLD
(REALISTIC, MULTI-SENSE, AREA)

Type: P **Range:** LOS (A)
Duration: S **Drain:** F

These spells produce a storm of conflicting sensations and images to confuse the senses. For each net hit on the Spellcasting Test, the target suffers a -1 dice pool modifier to all tests due to the distraction.

Confusion affects a single target. Mass Confusion is an area spell. The Chaos spell is a physical version of Confusion (above), so it also affects technological systems and sensing devices. Chaotic World is an area version of Chaos.

ENTERTAINMENT
(OBVIOUS, MULTI-SENSE, AREA)

Type: M **Range:** LOS (A)
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 3

TRID ENTERTAINMENT
(OBVIOUS, MULTI-SENSE, AREA)

Type: P **Range:** LOS (A)
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 2

These area spells create obvious, but entertaining, illusions. Hits on the Spellcasting Test measure how detailed, interesting, and captivating the audience finds the illusion. The magician can reproduce just about anything from her imagination, or re-create something she has experienced.

Entertainment affects the minds of the subjects and cannot be detected by non-living sensors. Trid Entertainment is a physical spell and can be perceived by both living subjects and non-living sensors.

These spells are used for amusement as well as art. The entertainment industry uses illusionists as literal special effects wizards. Magical designers and artists work to create new and interesting sensations, including sensations that can't otherwise be experienced in the real world. Only the wealthy can afford the unique experiences offered by such magicians firsthand.

INVISIBILITY
(REALISTIC, SINGLE-SENSE)

Type: M **Range:** LOS
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 2

IMPROVED INVISIBILITY
(REALISTIC, SINGLE-SENSE)

Type: P **Range:** LOS
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 1

This spell makes the subject more difficult to detect by normal visual senses (including low-light, thermographic, and other senses that rely on the visual spectrum). The subject is completely tangible and detectable by the other senses (hearing, smell, touch, and even taste, if it somehow comes to that). Her aura is still visible to astral perception.

Anyone who might be in a position to perceive the subject must first successfully resist the spell. Simply make one Spellcasting Test and use the hits scored as the threshold for anyone that resists at a later point. Even if the spell is resisted, the subject might remain undetected if she's good enough with her Sneaking Test. An invisible character may still be detected by non-visual means, such as hearing or smell. Attacks against invisible targets suffer the Blind Fire modifier if the attacker is unable to see or otherwise sense the subject of the spell.

Invisibility affects the minds of viewers. Improved Invisibility mimics the subject's surroundings from all angles and affects technological sensors as well.

MASK
(REALISTIC, MULTI-SENSE)

Type: M **Range:** T
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 2

PHYSICAL MASK
(REALISTIC, MULTI-SENSE)

Type: P **Range:** T
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 1

The Mask spell requires the magician to touch the subject. The subject assumes a different physical appearance (of the same basic size and shape as her natural form) chosen by the magician. This spell can alter the subject's voice, scent, and other physical characteristics as well.

Anyone who might see through the disguise must first successfully resist the spell. Simply make one Spellcasting Test and use the hits scored as the threshold for anyone that resists at a later point. Mask affects the minds of viewers. Physical Mask creates an illusion that affects technological sensors as well.

PHANTASM
(REALISTIC, MULTI-SENSE, AREA)

Type: M **Range:** LOS (A)
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 1

TRID PHANTASM
(REALISTIC, MULTI-SENSE, AREA)

Type: P **Range:** LOS (A)
Duration: S **Drain:** F

These area spells create convincing illusions of any object, creature, or scene the magician desires. They can create an illusion of anything the magician has seen before, from a flower or a credstick to a dragon breathing fire, as long as the illusion is no larger than the spell's area of effect.

Anyone who might pierce the illusion must successfully resist the spell. Simply make one Spellcasting Test and use the hits scored as the threshold for anyone attempting to resist at a later point.

Phantasm only affects living beings, while Trid Phantasm affects technological sensors as well.

HUSH
(REALISTIC, SINGLE-SENSE, AREA)

Type: M **Range:** LOS (A)
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 2

SILENCE
(REALISTIC, SINGLE-SENSE, AREA)

Type: P **Range:** LOS (A)
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 1

These spells create an area that dampens sound. Sonic attacks into or out of the field, as well as critter powers using a sonic medium (such as Paralyzing Howl), are reduced by -1 per hit on the Spellcasting Test. Anyone attempting to hear a sound from within or across the silenced area must successfully resist the spell.

Hush is a mana spell and so only affects living beings and magic sonic attacks. Silence affects technological devices and is useful for jamming alarms, detection devices, sonar, and tactical communications, as well as technological sonic weapons.

STEALTH
(REALISTIC, SINGLE-SENSE)

Type: P **Range:** LOS
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 2

Stealth makes the subject less audible to normal and augmented hearing. The subject moves in silence, making less or no noise. Things not directly touched by the subject can still make noise, so a character under a Stealth spell would make no noise knocking on a door, but the door would make noise hitting the floor or wall if it was kicked in.

Anyone who might hear the subject must first successfully resist the spell. Make a single Spellcasting Test and use the hits scored as the threshold for anyone who resists at a later point. Even if the spell is resisted, the subject might remain unnoticed if her Sneaking Tests are up to par.

MANIPULATION SPELLS

Manipulation spells control, animate, or transform matter and energy. There are a number of keywords for manipulation spells.

Damaging: Manipulation spells that cause damage have a Damage Value equal to their Force (unaltered by hits on the Spellcasting test) and 0 AP. The damage is resisted with Body + Armor.

Mental: Targets resist these spells with Logic + Willpower. Keep track of your net hits, as they determine how long you can sustain the spell. While the spell is sustained, the target may take a Complex Action on their turn to resist by making a Logic + Willpower Test with a dice pool penalty equal to the spell's Force; every hit the target gets reduces the caster's net hits by 1. The one being controlled can take this action even if they wouldn't get an action because of the spell. The spell ends when your net hits are reduced to zero.

A victim of mental manipulation spell may roll to notice the magical effect according to the usual rules for **Perceiving Magic** (p. 280). Some of the less subtle mental spells (Control Actions) are pretty obvious, but more subtle spells (like Control Thoughts) can be pretty insidious.

Environmental: These spells don't really have a target, and they don't really affect targets directly. They just affect an area.

Physical: These spells affect physical forms and are usually defended against with a living target's Body + Strength or an inanimate object's Object Resistance dice pool.

ANIMATE
(PHYSICAL)

Type: P **Range:** LOS
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 1

MASS ANIMATE
(PHYSICAL, AREA)

Type: P **Range:** LOS (A)
Duration: S **Drain:** F + 1

This spell causes inanimate objects to move. The object moves according to its structure (balls can roll, rugs may crawl, humanoid statues can walk, and so on). The spell imparts a limited flexibility, allowing solid objects such as statues to shamble a bit as if they had joints. You need to get net successes against the target's Object Resistance (p. 295); larger items (over 200 kilograms) have their resistance increased by 2 for every full 200 kilos they weigh. Controlling the object takes only a Simple Action; objects can also be ordered to maintain their movement while you direct your attention elsewhere. You only have rough control over the object's movement and can't manipulate individual parts or components (finer control requires a spell like **Magic Fingers**, p. 294). The maximum movement rate for objects is (Force) meters per turn, subject to the gamemaster's discretion. If the object is held by someone else, you need to win an Opposed Test using Force x 2 against the holder's Strength + Body to break the object free. If it's fastened, make this Force x 2 Success Test against an appropriate gamemaster-determined threshold.

Animate affects a single non-living object; Mass Animate is an area spell that can get a number of objects moving at once (like a room full of brooms, for example).

ARMOR
(PHYSICAL)

Type: P **Range:** LOS
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 2

This spell creates a glowing field of magical energy around the subject that protects against Physical Damage. It provides Armor equal to the hits scored and is cumulative with other armor. It is not included in any calculations to determine armor encumbrance (see **Armor and Encumbrance**, p. 169).

CONTROL ACTIONS
(MENTAL)

Type: M **Range:** LOS
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 1

MOB CONTROL
(MENTAL, AREA)

Type: M **Range:** LOS (A)
Duration: S **Drain:** F + 1

You control the physical actions of your target like a puppeteer pulling strings. The victim's consciousness is

unaffected, but you control the victim's body. Use your own skills when forcing your target to perform actions. It takes a Complex Action to make the target perform any action.

Control Actions only affects a single target, Mob Control affects any living targets within the area of effect. Victims of Mob Control may be manipulated individually (with separate actions) or issued the same command as a group (with a single action).

CONTROL THOUGHTS
(MENTAL)

Type: M **Range:** LOS
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 1

MOB MIND
(MENTAL, AREA)

Type: M **Range:** LOS
Duration: S **Drain:** F + 1

The magician seizes control of the target's mind, directing everything the target thinks. The magician mentally gives commands with a Standard Action, and the target is compelled to obey as if it were his own idea.

Control Thoughts affects a single target, while Mob Mind affects any living targets within the area of effect. Victims of a Mob Mind may be manipulated individually (with separate actions) or issued the same command as a group (with a single action).

FLING
(PHYSICAL, DAMAGING)

Type: P **Range:** LOS
Duration: I **Drain:** F - 2

This spell psychokinetically hurls a single object of no more than (Force) kilograms at a designated target. Use your Spellcasting Test in place of a normal Ranged Combat Test for the purposes of the item hitting the target, and use your Magic instead of Strength for determining Damage Value and range. Use standard grenade ranges (see **Range Table**, p. 185)

ICE SHEET
(ENVIRONMENTAL, AREA)

Type: P **Range:** LOS (A)
Duration: I **Drain:** F

This spell creates a slippery sheet of ice over the area of effect. Characters crossing the ice must make an Agility + Reaction Test with a threshold equal to the hits you score to avoid falling prone. Vehicles must make an immediate **Crash Test** (p. 201). The sheet melts at a rate of 1 square meter per minute at room temperature (faster when it's hotter, slower when it's colder, or not at all if it's below freezing).

IGNITE
(PHYSICAL)

Type: P **Range:** LOS
Duration: P **Drain:** F - 1

The Ignite spell accelerates molecular motion in the target, causing it to catch fire once the spell becomes permanent. Against non-living targets, the magician must succeed against the target's Object Resistance dice pool. Once the target ignites, it burns normally until it is consumed or extinguished.

Against living targets, treat Ignite as a Spellcasting + Magic [Force] v. Body + Reaction Test. If successful, the spell wraps a living target in heat and flames, eventually setting the target on fire (**Fire Damage** p. 171).

INFLUENCE
(MENTAL)

Type: M **Range:** LOS
Duration: P **Drain:** F - 1

You implant a single suggestion in the victim's mind, like a powerful post-hypnotic command. For example, you might have your target think that FizzyFluid is the best drink on the market, or that he can't remember his best friend's name, or that he should let you past a locked door. The target carries out this suggestion as if it were his own idea. If confronted with the wrongness of the suggestion (like when the reality of the flavor of FizzyFluid in his mouth contrasts with his belief that it's good), the subject can attempt to overcome it using the rules for overcoming mental manipulations (p. 292). In any case, the suggestion fades naturally after a number of minutes equal to your net hits.

LEVITATE
(PHYSICAL)

Type: P **Range:** LOS
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 2

Levitate allows you to telekinetically lift a person or object and move it around. You have to beat a threshold equal to the subject's mass divided by 200 kilograms, rounded up. The subject of the spell can be moved anywhere in your line of sight at a movement rate equal to the spell's Force in meters per Combat Turn.

If you're trying to levitate an item held by a living being, or levitate an unwilling living being, that being can defend against the Spellcasting Test with Strength + Body. You can use this spell to levitate yourself, if you need a view from a higher perspective or desire some parachute-free sky diving.

LIGHT
(ENVIRONMENTAL, AREA)

Type: P **Range:** LOS (A)
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 4

This spell creates a mobile point of light, illuminating a radius around it equal to the spell's Force in meters. The spell cannot be used to blind a target, but it offsets darkness visibility modifiers. Each hit on the Spellcasting Test counters a -1 die penalty due to light conditions.

MAGIC FINGERS
(PHYSICAL)

Type: P **Range:** LOS
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 2

Magic Fingers creates a psychokinetic effect as a sort of invisible hand that can hold or manipulate items. The hits on the Spellcasting + Magic Test become the spell's effective Strength and Agility. You can use skills remotely with Magic Fingers, replacing your inherent limits with the spell's Force. The spell has problems with fine control, so even simple actions such as picking up a coin may require a test (at the gamemaster's discretion). You can fight, pick a lock, or perform any other action, using the magic fingers as if they were your real hands. The magic fingers can manipulate objects within your line of sight, but only objects within a meter or so of one another at any given moment (the "hands" can't be farther away from each other than your arm span). This spell comes in very handy (no pun intended) for disarming bombs and handling other hazardous work from a safe distance.

MANA BARRIER
(ENVIRONMENTAL, AREA)

Type: M **Range:** LOS (A)
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 2

Mana Barrier creates an invisible barrier of magical energy. It has a barrier rating equal to the net hits scored and follows the rules for mana barriers (p. 315). This barrier does not restrict living beings or physical objects, but it impedes spirits, foci, dual beings, and spells on the plane in which you cast it (physical or astral). If cast on the astral plane, it also impedes astral forms and reduces visibility.

PHYSICAL BARRIER
(ENVIRONMENTAL, AREA)

Type: P **Range:** LOS (A)
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 1

This spell creates a glowing, translucent force field with 1 point of both Armor and Structure rating per hit. You can form the barrier as a dome with a radius and height equal to the spell's normal radius. Alternately, you can use it to form a wall with a height equal to the spell's Force and a length equal to its Force x 2.

Physical Barrier creates a physical wall. Anything the size of a molecule (or less) can pass through the barrier, including air or other gases. Anything bigger treats the barrier as a normal physical wall. The wall is translucent but shimmers, the equivalent of Light Fog (p. 175). The barrier does not impede spellcasting (other than visibility penalties), except for spells with physical components like indirect combat spells. The barrier can be brought down by physical attacks, but as long as you sustain it will regenerate all of its Structure Rating at the beginning of each Combat Turn. If the barrier is reduced to Structure Rating 0, it collapses and the spell ends.

POLTERGEIST
(ENVIRONMENTAL, AREA)

Type: P **Range:** LOS (A)
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 2

Poltergeist picks up all small objects (up to a kilogram in mass) within the spell's area and whirls them around in random patterns. This creates the equivalent visibility penalty of Light Fog (p. 175). The spell inflicts 2 boxes of Stun damage (resisted with Body + Armor) to anyone in the area each Combat Turn, whacking them with flying debris. Poltergeist may do more damage in cluttered environments, or inflict Physical damage if the gamemaster feels the debris is sufficiently dangerous (broken glass and nails, for example). If there is no debris lying around, this spell doesn't do much more than make a spooky noise.

SHADOW
(ENVIRONMENTAL, AREA)

Type: P **Range:** LOS (A)
Duration: S **Drain:** F - 3

Shadow creates a globe of darkness with a radius equal to the spell's Force in meters. For every two hits, increase the light penalty (p. 175) by one catagory—2 hits for Partial Light, 4 hits for Dim Light, and 6 hits for Total Darkness. This spell doesn't cause more than Total Darkness.

COUNTERSPELLING

Counterspelling offers the magician two benefits: spell defense and dispelling. The Counterspelling skill does not work against spirits, critter powers, or alchemical preparations.

SPELL DEFENSE

Spell defense is used against hostile spells cast at you or at targets that are within your line of sight (using the same rules as for targeting spells) that you decide to protect with spell defense. Declaring this protection is either a Free Action or, if you don't have one left, an Interrupt Action that reduces your Initiative Score by 5. Each Combat Turn, you have a pool of dice for spell defense equal to your Counterspelling skill. When a spell is cast, you may choose to use some or all of your Counterspelling dice to defend against an incoming spell. Against each spell attack, you have to choose

how many dice from this pool to allocate for defense, and you can select how many people (including yourself if you desire) are covered by these defensive dice. You can protect a number of people at one time equal to your Magic Rating. These dice are then added to the defense tests of everyone you're covering. The pool refreshes at the beginning of each Combat Turn.

EXAMPLE

Chordae's team is fighting a wiz gang. She has a Counterspelling skill of 7, which means she has 7 bonus spell defense dice to use each Combat Turn. Early in the Combat Turn she is targeted by a Manabolt spell, so she decides to use 3 Counterspelling dice to help fend it off. As a result, she adds 3 dice to her Defense Test against the spell.

A second opposing mage then decides to pound Chordae's team with a Fireball. She decides to use all 4 of her remaining dice to defend against this spell, and she designates herself and every member of her team as people protected by her efforts. That means Chordae and each of her teammates receives a +4 dice pool bonus to their Defense Tests. But after this, she's out of Counterspelling dice for now. If another spell comes in this Combat Turn, she and the rest of her group will have to resist it without Counterspelling help.

DISPELLING

Dispelling is used to counter a sustained or quickened spell. A Dispelling Test is the dispeller's Counterspelling + Magic [Astral] v. spell's Force + caster's Magic (+ amount of Karma spent on quickening the spell, if any). You may use a counterspelling focus to add to the test. You can also use reagents to change the limit of the test. Every net hit reduces the number of hits the caster had in casting the spell. This may reduce the effectiveness of the spell (for example, it could affect a Shadow spell's visibility modifier). If the spell is reduced to 0 net hits, the spell ends completely. Regardless of how it goes, you take the Drain from the spell as if you had cast it—Physical if the spell's Force was higher than your Magic rating, Stun otherwise.

A ritual can be dispelled if it contains a spell keyword and is ongoing (sustained or with a duration). Make an Opposed Counterspelling + Magic [Astral] Test against a dice pool equal to the sum of the Force of the spell and the total of the Magic ratings of all of the ritual's participants. Every net hit you get reduces the net hits from the ritual's sealing step (p. 296) by 1. You take drain equal to twice the hits (not net hits) on the opposing test. The Drain from dispelling a ritual is Stun unless the ritual's Force is greater than your Magic rating, in which case the Drain is Physical.

RITUAL SPELLCASTING

While spellcasting is the quick manipulation of mana, ritual spellcasting shapes mana over a longer period of time. More time allows you to manipulate mana in ways that normal spellcasting won't allow. Rituals, like spells and alchemical preparations, are learned separately and cost the same in Karma. Rituals can be performed by either one person or a group. Spells learned through normal channels can be incorporated into some rituals, such as a Combat spell in the Prodigal Spell ritual (p. 297), and do not cost additional Karma to learn separately (an advantage ritual magic has over alchemy).

To cast a ritual, follow these steps:

STEP 1: CHOOSE RITUAL LEADER

Each ritual must have a leader who knows the ritual being performed and can complete the last step, which seals the ritual. In this step, the participants must announce their participation with the leader. The participants do not need to have learned the ritual; they simply must be willing to take part. All effects from the ritual have the

OBJECT RESISTANCE TABLE

INITIATIVE TYPE	DICE POOL
Natural Objects	3
Trees, soil, unprocessed water, hand-carved wood, metal cold-worked by hand)	
Manufactured Low-Tech Objects and Materials	6
Brick, leather, simple plastics	
Manufactured High-Tech Objects and Materials	9
Advanced plastics, alloys, electronic equipment, sensors	
Highly Processed Objects	15+
Computers, complex toxic wastes, drones, vehicles	

leader's astral signature (p. 312). Each participant who is not of the same tradition as the leader suffers a –2 dice pool penalty on all actions for this ritual. If you're casting a ritual all alone, you're the leader.

STEP 2: CHOOSE RITUAL

The leader must then choose the ritual to perform. If required the leader also chooses the spell that will be included as part of the ritual. If the ritual requires knowledge of a spell or spell category, only the leader needs to know them.

STEP 3: CHOOSE THE FORCE OF THE RITUAL SPELL

The Force of the ritual determines not only its general power, but also the Force of any spell woven into it.

STEP 4: SET UP THE FOUNDATION

A ritual must be performed in a magical lodge appropriate to the leader's tradition, which is referred to as the **foundation** for the ritual. This can be a permanent magical lodge, or a temporary one created using reagents (p. 316). The Force of the lodge must equal or exceed the Force of the ritual to be cast. Once the lodge is active, no participant (except a **spotter**, if the ritual calls for one) may leave the foundation until the ritual is complete without causing the ritual to fail.

STEP 5: GIVE THE OFFERING

As part of the ritual, the leader must expend reagents equal to the Force of the ritual. The leader may expend more reagents to reduce Drain when sealing the spell (step 7). For every (Force) drams of reagents spent (after the initial offering), the Drain value is reduced by 1, to a minimum of 2.

Even if you're not spending reagents, you'll still be spending a little time on this step making the foundation ready for the ritual.

STEP 6: PERFORM THE RITUAL

During this step, the actual ritual is performed. The duration of this step is specific to each ritual (it's in the description), but it's almost always based on the ritual's Force.

STEP 7: SEAL THE RITUAL

The final step in any ritual is sealing it, which completes the ritual. The leader makes a Ritual Spellcasting + Magic [Force] v. (Force x 2) test, with a Teamwork test from each of the participants. Each ritual's description explains how the net hits from the sealing step are used, if at all.

After the spell effect goes off, each participant also takes Drain equal to twice the number of hits (not net hits) on the defense side of the Ritual Spellcasting Test (minimum 2). If the number of hits the leader got on her Teamwork Test was higher than her Magic rating, this drain is Physical; otherwise it's Stun.

RITUAL FAILURE

There are a number of rare things that could cause a ritual to fail prematurely. If a participant leaves the foundation after Step 4 of the ritual but before the ritual is complete, the ritual fails. If the leader is incapacitated (or killed) before Step 7, the ritual collapses and fails. If the foundation is disrupted or broken at any point after Step 4, the ritual fails.

When a ritual fails, every participant immediately suffers Drain. Make a Force x 2 test, as though the spell had actually been cast; the Drain is equal to twice the number of hits (not net hits) on this test in Stun damage. Any reagents you've already spent in Step 5 are wasted.

GLITCHES

A glitch on a ritual in any step could result in extra Drain (e.g.,+2 Drain Value), an increase of 2 to the Force resisting completion of the spell, or the leader being forced to seal the ritual on his own. On a critical glitch, anything goes (prepare to put down that minion, or find that you missed your target, or find that what you intended to be a healing circle really is an astral gateway and everybody just got dumped on some metaplane, or something equally unpleasant your gamemaster thinks up).

RITUALS

These are the rituals you can learn and cast. You learn each ritual the same way you learn a spell (p. 299). Some rituals have keywords, which have special rules, just like the keywords for spells.

Anchored: All anchored rituals must be placed on a physical object or symbol of mystical significance that serves as the ritual's focal point. This could be something used specifically for the ritual (a rock or a doorway to anchor a ward, for example), or a mystical inscription (written in ink, paint, blood, etch marks, etc.), or even the foundation itself. The anchor cannot be moved relative to the Gaiasphere (the planet) during the duration of the ritual's effect, or the ritual collapses and the effect ends early.

Material Link: The ritual requires a material link to the target, something that was once a part of the target. Material links from living beings aren't usable in rituals forever—the **Material Links sidebar** (p. 297) has all the details.

Minion: The ritual creates a semi-autonomous entity, usually something to help the magician who makes it. Whatever minion is created is bound to the ritual leader, who can't have more minions at a time than his Charisma rating.

Spell: This ritual is used in conjunction with a spell that the ritual leader knows. Some of its properties might change—the ritual has details on how. If the leader has any modifiers to the spell from a mentor spirit, the modifiers apply to the ritual, too. These rituals are susceptible to dispelling (p. 295).

Spotter: If the ritual's target is not in sight of the leader, the leader needs to designate someone who can see the target for them, referred to as the spotter. The individual acting as the spotter must be a member of the group casting the ritual—or a spirit bound to a member of that group—and must be able to astrally perceive the target. The spotter must be present in the ritual's foundation when the ritual begins and then must travel physically or astrally to where she can assense the target of the spell; this is an exception to the "no leaving" rule in Step 4 of ritual casting. The target does not have to be astrally active (and it's often safer for the spotter if he isn't); the spotter merely must be able to assense him to establish the necessary mystic link. If the spell is an area spell, the spotter must be able to assense the target location. For the duration of the ritual, a link is present between the spotter's astral form and the ritual group. If the spotter is noticed by the target, it is possible to use the link to track her back to the ritual team's physical location. The spotter doesn't make a Teamwork Test with the rest of the participants but still suffers the same Drain as everyone else.

CURSE
(MATERIAL LINK, SPELL)

A Curse allows an illusion spell to be cast on a subject through a material link rather than a mystic link from observing the subject. A Curse can be used on any target, whether within visual range of the leader or not, provided there is a link to the target. If the spell applies to multiple targets, such as in a mass spell, then the ritual must have a link to each of the targets.

The link is used as part of the offering and is effectively destroyed during the ritual. The spell is cast normally (using teamwork, if applicable) with all the tests and Drain appropriate to the chosen illusion spell (step 6 of Ritual Spellcasting).

For the duration of the ritual, a link is present between the target and the ritual group while the spell portion is sustained. It is possible to spot the link and use it to track back to the ritual team's physical location.

This ritual requires (Force) hours to complete.

PRODIGAL SPELL
(SPELL, SPOTTER)

This ritual allows you to cast any Combat spell at a distant target that is out of line of sight of your ritual team.

MATERIAL LINK

A material link is something that is an integral part of the target. If the target is an inanimate object, the link has to be something that is an essential part of the object's structure. A brick from a wall could be a material link; a picture hanging on the wall or other loose object from inside the building could not. If the target is a living being, it must be a tissue sample. Tissue samples, however, decompose eventually and cease to become viable as a material link. Hair, blood and other bodily fluids, nail clippings, and so on are viable for a few hours, while a finger or larger tissue samples (such as the proverbial pound of flesh) can last a few days before the being's aura fades too much for it to be a link. Chemical preservation methods instantly destroy the sample's viability as a material link, but samples can be frozen for later use.

The Combat spell can be either direct or indirect. Direct combat spells travel to the target in astral space. Indirect combat spells travel to the target in physical space, requiring a clear (but not necessarily straight) path in the physical world between the ritual team and target in order for the spell to reach its destination—the spell flies from the foundation to the target, dodging any obstacles in its path.

This ritual requires (Force) hours to perform.

REMOTE SENSING
(SPELL, SPOTTER)

This ritual allows you to cast any Detection spell with an even greater range. The area of the spell is increased to Force x (sum total of the participants' Magic attributes) x 100 meters. The spell's subject must be present in the foundation during the ritual but may then take his new sense outside the foundation while the ritual participants sustain it for him. All of the participants of the ritual perceive the same thing the subject perceives through the spell. If the spell has a target (like when you use a Mind Link or a Mind Probe spell in the ritual), you'll need a spotter to have eyes on the target.

This ritual takes (Force) hours to perform. Afterward, if any of the participants stops sustaining the ritual, it ends.

WARD
(ANCHORED)

The ward is a basic ritual, taught to many magicians. It creates a an astral barrier (p. 315) with a Force equal to the Force of the ritual. The ward may encompass a volume of up to fifty cubic meters times the sum of the participants' Magic ratings.

This ritual takes (Force) hours to complete. The ward lasts for a number of weeks equal to the net hits from the sealing step of the ritual—if the leader spends an amount of karma equal to the ward's Force, the ward is permanent.

CIRCLE OF PROTECTION
(ANCHORED)

The circle of protection is a small astral and physical barrier. Even though it's called a circle, it creates a sphere around the anchor that has a radius in meters equal to the leader's Magic rating. The circle acts as a combination of the physical barrier and mana barrier spells (p. 315) with a Force equal to the Force of the ritual. The mana barrier is dual-natured.

The ward lasts for a number of hours equal to the net hits from the sealing step. Anyone or anything within the barrier is protected from outside physical objects and magical attacks. If something crosses the barrier from the inside, then the ward ends. This ritual takes (Force) hours to perform.

CIRCLE OF HEALING
(ANCHORED, SPELL)

This ritual is used to cast a healing magic on a number of targets at once. Even though it's called a circle, it creates a sphere around the anchor that has a radius in meters equal to the leader's Magic rating. This ritual takes (Force) hours to complete. The net hits from the sealing step are used as the net hits for the spell, and apply to everyone in the circle as long as they remain in the circle. The circle lasts for (Force) days.

RENASCENCE
(ANCHORED, SPELL)

This ritual sustains and maintains an area manipulation spell for a time. The area of the spell is a sphere with a radius equal to the leader's Magic rating, and the effect is based on the ritual's Force and the net hits from the sealing step. The base duration of the effect is 1 hour, which is doubled for each net hit from the sealing step of the ritual.

This ritual takes (Force) hours to perform.

WATCHER
(MINION)

Watchers are like spirits, but in actuality are entities born from the ritual leader's own mind rather than the metaplanes. They are a creation of mana, woven with the personalities of the ritual participants. A watcher can speak any language its creators (which includes the leader and participants) can speak. A watcher is bound only to the leader of the ritual and follows his orders. A watcher lasts for a number of hours equal to its Force times the net hits on the sealing test. A watcher's skills are equal to half the Force of the ritual (rounded up).

A leader can dismiss a watcher bound to him as a Free Action. Watchers cannot be banished or counterspelled. This ritual takes (Force) minutes to perform.

HOMUNCULUS
(MINION)

The magician can bind a spark of intelligence into an inanimate form, creating a homunculus. The homunculus has a physical form but isn't very bright. It understands any language its creators (leader and participants) speak and has a modicum of a personality that reflects those of its creators.

You need an inanimate object to animate for the ritual. Despite the fact that their name means "little man," the homunculus doesn't need to be humanoid in shape—animal statuettes are pretty common among shamans, and don't underestimate the usefulness of an animated extension cord. It can be at most (Force x 10) kilograms in mass, and it gains a limited amount of flexibility (the same as the **Animate** spell, p. 292) for the duration of the ritual. Whatever you use, the object's Object Resistance dice pool is added to the opposition for the leader's and participants' Ritual Spellcasting Test, which is why you don't see many homunculus commlinks.

The homunculus obeys the leader's commands as much as possible within the limitations of its physical capabilities. Commanding a homunculus is not like commanding a spirit. A spirit is intuitive and intelligent; a homunculus just follows orders and becomes frustrated when the task becomes impossible. A homunculus lasts

WATCHERS AND HOMUNCULI

WATCHER

A pale reflection of the magician's personality, summoned to do the sorts of things at which a pale reflection might excel.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C
*	*	*	*	F-2	F-2	F-2	F-2

Astral Initiative	(F x 2) + 1D6
Skills	Assensing, Astral Combat, Perception
Powers	Astral Form, Manifest, Search, Sapience

** Watchers don't have a corporeal body.*

HOMUNCULUS

A physical servant than can do mundane chores for you.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I
*	F-2	F-2	F	1	1	1

Initiative	(F + 1) + 1D6
Movement	x2/x4/+1
Skills	Assensing, Astral Combat, Perception, Unarmed Combat
Powers	Sapience

** The body of a minion is equivalent to the Structure rating of the material used in creating it.*

for a number of days equal to its Force times the net hits on the sealing test. A watcher's skills are equal to half the Force of the ritual (rounded up).

This ritual takes (Force) hours to perform.

LEARNING SPELLS

New spells, rituals, or alchemical preparations (p. 316) can be learned by studying spell formulae or finding some mentor (either a spirit or another Awakened individual) to teach you. Some magicians may be lucky enough to have a library of collected scrolls and grimoires passed down from previous generations. They also could have an Awakened family member teach them a new spell. For the rest of the Awakened, there are online communities such as SpellSource and Magiknet that hold collections of formulae submitted from various traditions. These networks are generally supported by one or more corporations, meaning that in order to use it, you'll need have a legal SIN and a license to practice magic. Established magicians sometimes work in the grey area of teaching unlicensed magicians, picking up a little extra nuyen by passing on knowledge to someone not quite as experienced.

If you want to learn alone, you can buy a spell formula (prices on the **Magical Goods** table, p. 326). If you want a living, breathing teacher, they usually charge around (Instruction skill x formula cost) in nuyen—expensive, but usually worth every bit of the jing you spend. Either way, you'll need a magical lodge of your own tradition.

Once you have access to a magical lodge and either a formula or a teacher for the spell you want, you're ready to try to learn the spell. Make a Learning Test: a Simple (Spellcasting, Ritual Spellcasting, or Alchemy) + Intuition [magical lodge's Force] Test. The time you need to learn the spell is equal to 12 days, divided by the number of hits you get. If you have a teacher, he or she can make an Instruction Test (p. 141) to add extra dice to your Learning Test. At the end of the study time, spend 5 Karma to learn the spell, ritual, or alchemical preparation.

All injury modifiers apply, as do distractions from sustaining spells, poor conditions, and so forth. If your formula or teacher is of a different tradition than you, you take a -4 penalty to the Learning Test.

While learning the spell, you must devote eight hours of each day to learning the spell, otherwise you fail and must start all over. If you get no hits on the Learning Test, you fail. If you do end up failing, no Karma is spent, but any money you spent on instruction is gone.

CONJURING

Conjuring is the art of calling, dismissing, and controlling independent astral beings called **spirits.** Conjuring can compel a spirit to come to the magician and provide services or favors with Summoning, press a spirit into

lasting service with Binding, or dismiss or destroy a spirit with Banishing.

SUMMONING

You can summon spirits of your tradition (p. 279). Summoning a spirit is a Complex Action. You can only summon one spirit at a time, and it only hangs around for a limited time—a summoned spirit will return to wherever it was when you called it when it's either through with all of the services it owes you or when the sun rises or sets (whichever comes first).

Here's how to summon a spirit.

STEP 1: CHOOSE SPIRIT TYPE & FORCE

You can only choose a spirit of a type available to your tradition—most traditions have five types to choose from. You also need to choose the spirit's Force (the higher the Force the more powerful the spirit), up to twice your Magic rating. You can call a spirit with optional powers if the Force you choose is high enough; spirits have one optional power for every 3 full points of Force (so Force 1–2 spirits have no optional powers, Force 3–5 have 1, Force 6–8 have 2, and so on). Once a spirit has been summoned, its optional powers cannot be changed.

GROUP SUMMONING

Magicians can use teamwork to summon a spirit. All of the team members must be able to summon the type of spirit intended, and team members who are a different tradition than the team leader suffer a –2 dice pool penalty on their roll. The team uses the normal Teamwork rules for the test (p. 49), and all of them suffer the same amount of Drain, which is twice the hits (not net hits) on the spirit's defense test. If successful, only the leader of the ritual may command the spirit, so choose wisely.

STEP 2: ATTEMPT SUMMONING

Make an Opposed Test using Summoning + Magic [Force] v. spirit's Force. You may spend reagents to change the limit of this test (**Reagents,** p. 316). If you get no net hits, the spirit doesn't show up. If you get net hits, the spirit arrives nearby in astral space, owing you one service per net hit. The nature of the services the spirit can provide depends on the type of spirit and its Force and powers (**Spirit Services,** p. 302).

STEP 3: RESIST DRAIN

Whether you successfully summon the spirit or not, you must resist Drain from the attempt. The Drain Value is equal to twice the hits (not net hits) on the spirit's defense test, with a minimum Drain Value of 2. If the spirit's Force is greater than your Magic rating, the Drain is Physical; otherwise it's Stun.

GLITCHES

A glitch on conjuring can result in the wrong spirit type (but still one within the summoner's tradition), a spirit of lesser force (who makes the Opposed Test at the Force the summoner selected), or extra Drain (e.g., +2) to resist. On a critical glitch, kindhearted gamemasters could double the Drain the magician must resist or not allow the Drain to be resisted at all. More punitive (read: evil) gamemasters may see this as an opportunity to introduce the magician to a spirit of the intended Force who is not under the summoner's control and wishes to have a "conversation" about how some spirits feel the practices of summoning and binding is a form of slavery.

BINDING

Binding is used to compel long-term services from a spirit that you've already summoned. This takes one hour per Force of the spirit and requires (Force x 25)

SPIRITUAL RELATIONSHIPS

The exact relationship between spirit and magician depends in part upon the character's tradition. Various shamanic traditions provide offerings (not necessarily reagents) to spirits for their services. Magicians have offered physical gifts (like incense, leaves, beer, or lit candles), tribute (like praise, songs, stories, or just conversation), and promises (protecting a forest or watching over a community). Some magicians give freely and some see offerings as bait. Some magicians don't bother giving any offerings at all.

The exact nature of spirits, how the spirits who are summoned are selected, and why they look the way they do is a subject of much debate among Sixth World magical scholars. What is clear, though, is that summoned spirits tend to appear in a way that is appropriate to the summoner's tradition. This could be because the summoner's magic helps determine what spirit is summoned, or the spirit could be trying to gain the favor of the summoner by appearing in a shape the summoner expects. Most spirits seem to like being on Earth, but the exact reasons are unclear and the spirits are not keen to share any information.

BAD FEELINGS WITH BOUND SPIRITS

Spirits are powerful entities, and the ability to call on their potent skills is formidable.

While unbound spirits are limited in the services they can offer, bound spirits are compelled by the magical bond to do their utmost on the magician's behalf, even if it means sacrificing their Force and disrupting themselves for a time.

Bound spirits find it distasteful being forced into servitude, and they sometimes struggle against the mystical bond. Such an effort is futile, though, unless the magician is on the brink of death. If the gamemaster chooses, a spirit that has been set on a particularly long and/or undignified task may struggle against their binding, which imposes a –1 penalty to all tests as the magician works to compel the spirit to do his bidding, like a dog on a leash (an analogy, by the way, that would not make many spirits happy). At any point, the magician can take a Complex Action to try to bring the spirit to heel through an Opposed Summoning + Magic vs. spirit's Force + Willpower Test. If the magician ties the spirit or get more hits, the spirit is calmed down and performs their service without further penalties for the summoner.

This modifier should only be applied if the summoner is either cruel toward the spirits he controls or if he repeatedly puts them at risk (occasional combat is fine, but being routinely disrupted gets old). This magical power drain is the compelling reason why most magicians keep their bound spirits at rest. While the spirit is resting in astral space, the bond between magician and spirit has no effect on the magician. It should only be used when roleplaying calls for it, or to keep a player from abusing spirits in gameplay.

drams of reagents to be used up in the binding. The test is an Opposed Binding + Magic [Force] v. spirit's Force x 2, and it inflicts Drain equal to twice the hits (not net hits) on the spirit's defense test, minimum 2. Additional net hits beyond the first add to the number of services the spirit owes.

Once the spirit is bound, then the spirit and its services do not expire at the next sunrise or sunset. A spirit's service ends when it has no more services owed to the magician. The bound spirit can be called or dismissed with a Simple Action as they appear next to the magician from the metaplane, awaiting further instructions on the astral. A magician can bind up to his Charisma attribute in spirits.

BANISHING

Banishing is severing the bond between a spirit and its summoner. When the bond is broken, the spirit returns to its own plane. This is not the same as disrupting a spirit and forcing it back to their home plane—while it interrupts the spirit at what it's doing and may be annoying, banishing is not as downright unpleasant as disruption (and a spirit engaged in a tedious task might not mind being banished in the least).

Banishing is a Complex Action. You make an Opposed Banishing + Magic [Astral] Test (you can spend reagents to set the limit of this test, p. 316). This test is opposed by the spirit's Force (+ the summoner's Magic if the spirit is bound). For every net hit you get, the number of services the spirit owes is reduced by 1. If you reduce the spirit's owed services to zero, it's free and departs on its next action.

The Drain Value for banishing is equal to twice the hits (not net hits) on the spirit's defense test, with a minimum Drain Value of 2. If the spirit's Force is greater than your Magic rating, the Drain is Physical, otherwise it's Stun.

If you (or another magician) has an action before the spirit departs, you can use **Summoning** (p. 300) to try to get it to owe *you* some services. It doesn't matter what type the spirit is or which tradition you are in this case, since it's already out and available.

SPIRIT BASICS

Spirits are naturally astral forms, much like you're naturally a physical form. A spirit exists entirely in astral space, with astral attributes equal to its Force. A spirit can manifest (p. 314), use astral travel (p. 313), and get blocked by mana barriers (p. 315), just like any other astral form. Its appearance strongly reflects its type and the tradition of the magician who summoned it. A hermetic fire spirit might look like a traditional fire elemental, while a shaman's spirit of air might appear as an eagle or a butterfly.

If a spirit wants to affect anything on the physical plane, it has to materialize first (p. 314). It gets physical attributes based on its type (**Spirits,** p. 303) and appears as a solid, physical version of its astral form—it's relatively solid even if it doesn't look solid, like a spirit whirlwind or a water elemental. The spirit is **dual-natured** while it's materialized, which means it exists simultaneously on the physical and astral plane, meaning it can see objects in both places—and be targeted by both mages on the physical plane and astral entities, such as astrally projecting mages. When materialized, the spirit is able to perceive the physical world much as other material beings do. A spirit's physical form is metahuman-sized or smaller and very obviously ethereal (there is no mistaking a spirit for something worldly). Its physical body

is not subject to gravity—though most spirits stay close to the ground because that's where all the action is—but it can be knocked around by other forces (which makes staying grounded handy at times).

Spirits follow the normal rules for combat, whether physical or astral. If all of the boxes on a spirit's Condition Monitor (either of them) are filled, the spirit is painfully disrupted and is forced back to its home metaplane. Any services it still owes are lost.

There are all sorts of theories and traditions about where spirits come from, and it's easy to get involved in the kinds of arguments that go on for days and don't get anywhere, due to a lack of established facts. Some people believe that spirits are the souls of other beings that once lived on Earth, while others believe that spirits are beings who are extra-planar in origin and have no real connection to beings on the material plane. Then there is a whole host of beliefs that cover the middle ground between these two theories. In the end, it might be best to stop trying to know the unknowable and just focus on this: Spirits live on a metaplane related to their type. They come from their home metaplane when they are summoned, they go back when they are let go, banished, or disrupted. If you're going for the Howling Coyote Prize for Magical Research, by all means keep digging for answers, but otherwise it might be better to just stick with what we already know.

SPIRIT-SUMMONER LINK

A spirit doesn't have to speak to his summoner out loud. It can communicate telepathically with the summoner, even from astral space, so it doesn't even have to manifest to receive orders or make reports. This link allows for communication over a distance but does not extend to the metaplanes, nor does it allow any other visual or audio connection. With this link, a summoner knows when a spirit he has summoned has been disrupted, as he will feel the loss of the link.

SPIRIT RANGE

Your spirit can't move farther away from you than your Magic rating x 100 meters. If forced out of this radius, the spirit will try to return as quickly as possible. If you send a spirit beyond this range, it counts as a remote service.

SPIRIT SERVICES

Services are how we measure how helpful a spirit is willing (or required) to be to you. A service is a single task that you request (or demand) from a spirit. The number of services a spirit owes you is equal to the number of net hits you get on your Summoning or Binding Test. If the spirit's time is up (like when the sun comes up and your spirit isn't bound), then any services it still owes are lost to you.

SPIRIT SERVICES TABLE

UNBOUND SPIRIT SERVICES	BOUND SPIRIT SERVICES
Combat	Any Unbound Spirit Service
Power Use	Aid Alchemy
Physical Task	Aid Sorcery
Remote Service	Spell Binding
	Spell Sustaining

The services a spirit can perform are based on whether or not it's bound to you. Bound spirits are tougher to get, but are a lot more helpful. Each of the following cost you a service.

UNBOUND SPIRIT SERVICES

Combat: You can have a spirit fight on your side in combat. The entire fight counts as a single service.

Power use: You can have a spirit use one of its powers on a target or targets of your choosing. If the power is sustained, it counts as one service no matter how long it's sustained. If the spirit uses a power as part of another task (often in combat), then the power use doesn't count as a separate service.

Physical task: A spirit can materialize to perform actions on the physical plane for you.

Remote service: If you send a spirit to complete a service beyond your Magic rating x 100 meters, it's a remote service. Once the spirit is done with a remote service, it is released and goes to its home metaplane, no matter how many services it still owes you.

BOUND SPIRIT SERVICES

Unbound spirit service: You can have a bound spirit do any of the things an unbound spirit can do for you. If you have a bound spirit perform a remote service, you don't lose any extra services when it's done, and it comes back to you when it's finished.

Aid Alchemy, Sorcery, and Study: As a service, the spirit can add its Force as a dice pool bonus to your Alchemy, Spellcasting, Ritual Spellcasting (for spell rituals), and Learning Tests if its type matches the spell's category, as listed under your tradition (p. 279).

Spell sustaining: You can have a spirit sustain a spell for you after you cast it. It takes the -2 dice pool penalty per sustained spell, instead of you. It can't do this forever—only for its Force in Combat Turns for each service you spend on spell sustaining.

Spell binding: This is like spell sustaining, but for a lot longer, at the cost of the spirit's own Force. The spell you hand off is sustained indefinitely, but the spirit's Force is irrevocably reduced by 1 each day (or part thereof) of spell binding. If the spirit's Force is reduced to 0 this way

SPIRITS

Spirits are denizens of the metaplanes. They're usually only found when a magician summons them, but there are many free spirits who live unbound on the material plane. Here is the game information for the six types of spirits in this book.

Physical Attributes: The Physical attributes listed below are used when a spirit is materialized in the physical plane. The minimum attribute rating is 1, even if the table says it should be lower.

Skills: Spirits have the listed skills at a rating equal to their Force.

Movement: On the physical plane, spirits' Walking rate is Agility x 2. Their Running rate is Agility x 4. They can move in any direction, ignoring gravity. They use the Running skill to "sprint" for +2 meters per hit.

Optional Powers: For every 3 full points of Force a spirit has, it has one optional power. A spirit can't change the optional powers it has.

SPIRITS

SPIRITS OF AIR

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	EDG	ESS	M
F-2	F+3	F+4	F-3	F	F	F	F	F/2	F	F

Initiative	(F x 2) + 4 + 2D6
Astral Initiative	(F x 2) + 3D6
Skills	Assensing, Astral Combat, Exotic Ranged Weapon, Perception, Running, Unarmed Combat
Powers	Accident, Astral Form, Concealment, Confusion, Engulf, Materialization, Movement, Sapience, Search
Optional Powers	Elemental Attack, Energy Aura, Fear, Guard, Noxious Breath, Psychokinesis
Special	Spirits of Air get +10 meters per hit when Sprinting

SPIRITS OF BEASTS

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	EDG	ESS	M
F+2	F+1	F	F+2	F	F	F	F	F/2	F	F

Initiative	(F x 2) + 2D6
Astral Initiative	(F x 2) + 3D6
Skills	Assensing, Astral Combat, Perception, Unarmed Combat
Powers	Animal Control, Astral Form, Enhanced Senses (Hearing, Low-Light Vision, Smell), Fear, Materialization, Movement, Sapience
Optional Powers	Concealment, Confusion, Guard, Natural Weapon (Drain Value = Force Physical damage, AP —), Noxious Breath, Search, Venom

SPIRITS OF EARTH

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	EDG	ESS	M
F+4	F-2	F-1	F+4	F	F-1	F	F	F/2	F	F

Initiative	((F x 2) – 1) + 2D6
Astral Initiative	(F x 2) + 3D6
Skills	Assensing, Astral Combat, Exotic Ranged Weapon, Perception, Unarmed Combat
Powers	Astral Form, Binding, Guard, Materialization, Movement, Sapience, Search
Optional Powers	Concealment, Confusion, Engulf, Elemental Attack. Fear

SPIRITS OF FIRE

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	EDG	ESS	M
F+1	F+2	F+3	F-2	F	F	F+1	F	F/2	F	F

Initiative	((F x 2) + 3) + 2D6
Astral Initiative	(F x 2) + 3D6
Skills	Assensing, Astral Combat, Exotic Ranged Weapon, Flight, Perception, Unarmed Combat
Powers	Accident, Astral Form, Confusion, Elemental Attack, Energy Aura, Engulf, Materialization, Sapience
Optional Powers	Fear, Guard, Noxious Breath, Search
Weaknesses	Allergy (Water, Severe)
Special	Spirits of Fire get +5 meters per hit when Sprinting

SPIRITS

SPIRITS OF MAN

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	EDG	ESS	M
F+1	F	F+2	F-2	F	F	F+1	F	F/2	F	F

Initiative	((F x 2) + 2) + 2D6
Astral Initiative	(F x 2) + 3D6
Skills	Assensing, Astral Combat, Perception, Spellcasting, Unarmed Combat
Powers	Accident, Astral Form, Concealment, Confusion, Enhanced Senses (Low-Light, Thermographic Vision), Guard, Influence, Materialization, Sapience, Search
Optional Powers	Fear, Innate Spell (any one spell known by the summoner; Force is limited to spirit's Magic), Movement, Psychokinesis

SPIRITS OF WATER

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	EDG	ESS	M
F	F+1	F+2	F	F	F	F	F	F/2	F	F

Initiative	((F x 2) + 2) + 2D6
Astral Initiative	(F x 2) + 3D6
Skills	Assensing, Astral Combat, Exotic Ranged Weapon, Perception, Unarmed Combat
Powers	Astral Form, Concealment, Confusion, Engulf, Materialization, Movement, Sapience, Search
Optional Powers	Accident, Binding, Elemental Attack, Energy Aura, Guard, Weather Control
Weaknesses	Allergy (Fire, Severe)
Special	Spirits of Water move twice as fast when in water.

it dissipates forever. This is very painful for spirits and generally considered to be abusive—if you use this don't forget that word gets around in the spirit world.

SPIRITS AND EDGE

Summoned and bound spirits don't have their own Edge pools (or if they do, they don't use them). However, you can spend your own Edge pool on your summoned spirits' tests if you like.

ENCHANTING

Enchanting is the technique of tapping into the fundamental power latent in natural elements and imbuing items with magic that aids and enhances a magician's abilities. With it, you can enchant small items with spells, create magical foci, and break down magical items into component reagents.

ALCHEMY

From mystic flamethrowers to preparing a six-demon bag, alchemy allows the magician to prepare objects that hold a spell to be released later. Preparations are generally less powerful than their spell counterparts, but they often are more versatile. The object used as a preparation must be small enough for the magician to lift, handle, and manipulate. The magician alters, marks, sculpts, or otherwise adds a creative touch to the object in the process of making it a preparation. This also makes it recognizable as a preparation with a successful Arcana + Intuition [Mental] Test.

Preparations carry an aura with the astral signature of its creator, which is visible in astral space. The aura and astral signature fades at the same rate as a cast spell (p. 283) after activation. Preparations which, when active, sustain a spell, become temporarily dual-natured while the spell is active.

Here's how to make an alchemical preparation.

STEP 1: CHOOSE A SPELL

Choose the alchemical version of the spell to be prepared. Spells used in preparations are different versions of the Sorcery spells listed on p. 283, but have the same effect, Drain Value, keywords, and so on as those spells. You learn the alchemical versions of these spells separately from Sorcery spells, but the Karma cost is the same. You can only choose an alchemical spell you know.

STEP 2: CHOOSE SPELL FORCE

You must declare the Force at which your preparation will be created. The Force acts as a limit on the preparation, so higher Force preparations are more powerful, but at the cost of more Drain. You can make a preparation at a Force up to twice your Magic rating.

STEP 3: CHOOSE THE LYNCHPIN FOR THE PREPARATION

The object used for the preparation is called the lynchpin. It must be small enough for you to lift, handle, and manipulate. In addition, the lynchpin must not have any

aura already, so living beings are right out. For most magic, high-tech items are a concern because of Object Resistance, but such items can become preparations because the object itself is not being enchanted, it's just acting as an anchor for the alchemical spell.

STEP 4: CHOOSE PREPARATION TRIGGER

A preparation releases its spell when a condition called the trigger is met. Choose a trigger type for the preparation. The trigger you pick can add to the Drain Value of the preparation.

Command: The preparation is triggered by you. You must be on the physical plane (or manifest if you're astrally projecting), have line of sight to the preparation (as defined for **Spellcasting**, p. 281), and take a Simple Action to trigger the preparation. You have some control over the preparation's target with this trigger. This trigger adds +2 Drain to the creation of the preparation. Command triggers are the only triggers preparation with healing spells can have.

Contact: The next living being to touch the preparation activates the spell. This trigger adds +1 Drain.

Time: Choose an amount of time when picking this trigger. The countdown starts at the end of the creation of the preparation, and the preparation is activated when the time's up. The time you declare is limited by the final Potency of the preparation in hours—if the time is greater than the resulting Potency after creation, the preparation activates prematurely. This trigger adds +2 Drain to the creation of the preparation.

STEP 5: CREATE THE PREPARATION

Once everything else is settled, you need to spend uninterrupted time crafting the lynchpin into a preparation—a number of minutes equal to the preparation's Force. You spend this time drawing arcane formulae, carving symbols or hieroglyphs, mixing materials into the lynchpin, or some other time-honored way of working your magic that relates to your tradition—the higher the Force, the more complex and intricate your work.

You can use reagents in the crafting of a preparation. They are expended in crafting (as inks, attached tchotchkes, etc.), and the number of drams of reagents used then becomes the limit instead of Force (see **Reagents**, p. 316).

After the time elapses for creation of the preparation, make an Alchemy + Magic [Force] Test opposed by the Force of the preparation. The net hits from this test become the preparation's Potency. If you get no net hits, the Preparation fails, the time is wasted, and you still take drain.

STEP 6: RESIST DRAIN

Drain for a preparation is the same as for the spell, plus any additional Drain based on the chosen trigger. If you get more hits on your Alchemy Test than your Magic rating, the Drain is Physical, otherwise it's Stun.

GLITCHES

On a glitch, you may have put the wrong trigger on the preparation, or the duration of a time trigger could be off, or the preparation may resist at a higher force than usual (+2 to Force). On a critical glitch—well, we wouldn't recommend drinking whatever the end result is. It may blow up in your hand when you move it. Or something equally unpleasant your gamemaster comes up with. It's probably best just to step away (or run) from the preparation until the Potency fades.

EXAMPLE

Abbi Kadabra is putting together a few toys for a B&E job. Normally she doesn't leave any preparations behind, but there are times when she can't avoid it. One of her preparations is a simple glass sphere that she etches so it will hold a Force 5 shadow spell. Her Magic Rating is 5 and her Alchemy skill is 5. So to begin the preparation, she chose the Shadow spell at Force 5. She then chooses the command trigger for it. She uses 8 reagents to coat the sphere before etching (thus increasing the limit to 8). For 5 minutes, she carefully etches the glass with cuneiform lettering describing an ancient curse of darkness. She then rolls 10 dice (Magic + Alchemy) opposed by the Force of the spell (5 dice). She manages to get 6 successes while the opposition gets 0. If she had not used reagents, the potency of the shadow preparation would have been limited to 5 (her Mental limit); instead it's at 6.

Abbi then resists drain. Drain value is 5 (Force –2, +2 for trigger). Because the Potency is 6, the Drain is Physical. While taxing on her body (and a little costly on reagents), the preparation is complete.

THE FINISHED PREPARATION

An alchemical preparation is a temporary form of magic. The preparation's Potency determines how many hours the magic can be sustained and how strong the preparation's spell is when activated. The preparation maintains full Potency for [Potency x 2] hours. For every hour that passes after that period, the preparation's Potency is reduced by 1. When Potency reaches 0, or the lynchpin is broken, it loses its magical nature and the spell is lost.

USING A PREPARATION

When the spell is released from the preparation, it goes off as though it were cast by a magician. The Spellcasting Test uses the preparation's Potency in place

of Spellcasting, and the preparation's Force in place of Magic (with the Force also serving as the limit). If the spell is sustained, it lasts for (Potency) minutes (or in the case of a permanent spell until it becomes permanent). There is no Drain in this spellcasting because it was already taken by the alchemist; likewise no Edge pool can be spent on this spellcasting.

The target(s) of a preparation must be on the physical plane The actual target(s) of the spell depend on the range of the spell used:

Touch: Touch spells affect the living being touching the preparation. If more than one living being is touching the preparation when it activates, the spell's target is either chosen by the magician (if the command trigger was chosen) or at random.

Line of Sight: The target of the spell is chosen by the magician if the preparation employed a command trigger, otherwise the spell hits the nearest viable target within line of sight. In either case, the spell's range is limited to (Potency x Force) meters.

Area: The preparation is the center of the area of effect, and the radius is the Potency of the preparation in meters.

SAMPLE ALCHEMICAL PREPARATIONS

A Lightning Bolt spell with a command trigger and a lynchpin of a decorative cylinder of wood, recently carved with Athabaskan artwork.

A Fireball spell with a time trigger bound to an 8-ball marked with a formula relating to spontaneous combustion written in silver marker.

A Death Touch alchemical spell with a touch trigger bound to a credstick, acid-etched with a haiku in kanji. It is left in some barrens, just waiting for someone to pick it up.

A Ram alchemical spell with a command trigger bound to a hammer worked with Nordic runes dedicated to the god Thor.

ARTIFICING

Enchanting is the technique of tapping into the fundamental power latent in natural elements and imbuing items with magic that aids and enhances a magician's abilities. The act of creating a magical focus is known as artificing. Unlike other magical goods, a focus is powerful, reusable, and intimately tied to its owner. A focus represents a permanent and complex enchantment built up slowly from an arcane formula and finished with Karma. All foci follow the same basic creation process: first a focus formula is needed, then an appropriate telesma (the material item to be enchanted) is selected. After that the enchantment proper is created, and finally the finished focus is bonded.

This is how to do it.

STEP 1: CHOOSE FOCUS FORMULA

Designing a focus requires a complex arcane recipe known as a focus formula. Focus formulae, like all magical formulae, are produced using the Arcana skill. They are too complex for metahuman magicians to memorize and must be recorded in some fashion. You can buy focus formulae from lore stores and talismongers.

All focus formulae specify the type of focus (spell, spirit, power, weapon, etc.), Force, form (wooden quarterstaff, gold ring, vibroknife, etc.), and tradition of the focus (hermetic, shamanic, etc.). The formulae sold by talismongers typically use "traditional" forms in widespread magical traditions (wands, magical amulets, rune-carved swords, etc.)—which is why a lot of magicians commonly create their own formulae. The focus formula must be for a Force that is equal to or less than your Magic rating—you cannot make foci with ratings greater than your Magic rating.

If you'd rather create your own focus formula, you can design one from scratch. Researching a focus formula is an Arcana + Magic [Astral] (Force x Force, 1 day) Extended Test. Once complete, the focus formula may be used by any magician of your tradition to make that specific focus. A magician can translate a focus formula from another tradition into their own with an Arcana + Magic [Astral] (Force, 1 day) Extended Test.

STEP 2: OBTAIN THE TELESMA

Before you can create a focus, you need to acquire an item that matches the form defined in the focus formula. An object being prepared for enchantment in this manner is known as a telesma. Obtaining telesma may be simple or complex—if the formula calls for a knife it may be no more difficult than buying a blade from the local Weapons World franchise, but if the formula calls for a flute carved from the bones of a California condor, you might need to do some work to track down the item in question. Any inanimate object can serve as the telesma: a wooden wand, a jeweled charm, a weapon, a car, an oddly shaped stone, and so on. The more unprocessed and natural the object, or the more work you performed to craft it, the easier the telesma is to enchant. For this reason, enchanters with the technical or artistic skill to do so often create telesma themselves.

STEP 3: PREPARE THE MAGICAL LODGE

You'll need a magical lodge with a Force at least equal to that of the formula Force, and of the same tradition

as yourself and the focus formula. While you're there, make sure you add some amenities, because you're going to be in there for a while.

STEP 4: SPEND REAGENTS

Second, you need to spend reagents. The amount you need to spend (in drams) is equal to the amount of karma the focus would require to be bonded at the Force specified in the focus formula (p. 306), with a minimum of (Force) drams. These reagents are spent at the start of the process, so they are used up even if you fail or abort the crafting.

STEP 5: CRAFT THE FOCUS

Next, you need to spend a number of days equal to the Force in the focus formula. You use this time to gather mana, hanging it on the telesma and working it into the material permanently. You're actually working sporadically over the course of each day, so you can do other business during this time, but you can't leave the lodge without ruining your crafting attempt.

At the end of the crafting time, it is time for the dangerous part of the process: invoking the power of the focus. Make an Artificing + Magic [formula Force] v. formula Force + telesma's Object Resistance. This counts as the culmination of all your work over the days, so you can't use Edge for this test. Your net hits from this test, if you succeed, become the focus's actual Force. If you glitch, you cannot resist Drain in the next step. If you critically glitch, the magic spins out of your control and rips away 1 Essence from you—artificing is not for the weak or untrained.

STEP 6: RESIST DRAIN

The Drain Value is the Force specified by the focus formula, plus 2 for each hit (not net hit) rolled against you in the Artificing test; the Drain is Physical if the actual Force of the focus somehow ends up greater than your Magic rating. If you're still conscious after resisting Drain, you can spend an amount of karma equal to the actual Force of the focus to seal the deal and finish the focus. If you fall unconscious or don't want to keep the result, skip the karma expenditure and start over (probably after you've healed).

ARTIFACT ASSENSING

The Artificing skill also allows you to assense a focus in a way that helps you understand its creator. Make an Opposed Test of Artificing + Magic [Astral] vs. twice the Force of the focus. You can use the net hits to learn about the aura of the artificer who crafted it (see Assensing Table, p. 313). This can be attempted once a day per focus.

DISENCHANTING

The Disenchanting skill allows the magician to temporarily disrupt or even unweave astral constructs.

To deactivate an active focus, make an Opposed Disenchanting + Magic [Astral] v. target's Force + owner's Magic Test. You can do this from the physical or astral plane, though you must have line of sight to the focus. If you get more successes on the test, the focus deactivates.

With the Disenchanting skill, a focus can be effectively recycled, as a portion of the freed mana can recharge spent reagents. To break a focus down into reagents and totally destroy it, a magician must have touch contact with it. Breaking down a focus requires an Opposed Disenchanting + Magic [Astral] v. target's Force (+ owner's Magic if bonded and if the focus isn't yours) Test.

If you succeed in this test, the focus ceases to be. The telesma at the heart of it disintegrates and is unusable. The mana released from the destruction of the astral construct can be channeled into objects of the magician's tradition, making them into reagents. Make an Alchemy + Magic [Astral] Test. Every success creates one reagent, up to maximum of one-third of the reagents used in creating the focus (see step 4 of **Artificing**, p. 306). This process takes a number of hours equal to the target's Force.

Disenchanting also works with alchemical preparations. For rules on this, see **Disjoining** below.

Drain Value for all these tests are 1S per hit (not net hit) rolled against the magician; if the target's Force exceeds the magician's Magic rating, the Drain is Physical. If the target's Force exceeds twice their Magic rating, then that item's a bit more than the mage can handle, and they cannot attempt the Disenchantment.

DISJOINING

Put simply, disjoining is to Alchemy as dispelling is to Spellcasting. Disjoining allows you to remove the magic power from a preparation, making it into an ordinary object again. To disjoin a preparation, you need to have identified the object as a preparation by assensing it (p. 142), and you need to touch it to make the attempt. Disjoining takes a Complex Action, and you make an Opposed Disenchanting + Magic [Astral] Test vs. the preparation's Force + the alchemist's Magic Rating (plus any Karma from the fixation metamagic). Every net hit you get reduces the preparation's Potency by 1. You then take the same amount of Drain as you would have if you'd created the preparation yourself.

There's a risk to doing this—if the preparation has a contact trigger and you fail the Disenchanting Test, the preparation activates. Better hope it's not explosive.

ADEPTS

In the small segment of the world that has Awakened to magic powers, there is an even smaller segment who are able to channel the mana into themselves, giving them enhanced physical abilities that made them more than metahuman. They are called physical adepts—or, for those who like fewer words, just adepts—and they are known for their very disciplined self-improvement. They include athletes, martial artists, religious acolytes, exercise gurus, and others who seek to combine mind and body. Adepts are concerned with the harmony of body and mind and the strengthening of both, and they focus their magical power toward those ends.

In the early days of the Sixth World, when the world saw the rise of people who could use magic to increase their own physical and mental potential, adepts didn't face the same prejudice as magicians and shamans. Instead they found themselves facing a mythos generated by corporate trids extolling their magical athleticism. This put adepts up on a pedestal—people either wanted to try to fight them to gain rep or to worship them, thinking that perhaps that would be the path to getting some abilities for themselves. Registration of adepts is less common than registration of magicians, but adepts still need the appropriate licenses to purchase magical goods or cast spells if they are that rare hybrid, the mystic adept.

As an adept, you get Power Points equal to your Magic Rating at character creation. You then spend the Power Points on buying adept powers. The maximum number of levels you can have of any one power is equal to your Magic Rating, or up to a limit listed by the power, whichever is less. If your Magic Rating is 4, you get 4 Power Points, but could (for example) only buy 4 levels of Critical Strike (at a cost of 2 Power Points).

USING POWERS

Some powers are activated, and some are intrinsic. Adept powers that need to be activated before they have any effect have an activation cost listed in the power's description (usually an action of some sort). When a power doesn't list an activation cost, their effect is intrinsic—you don't have to take any action to gain the benefit of the power.

Adept Drain: Some powers cause Drain. The Drain from adept powers is Stun unless specified in the description, and is resisted with Body + Willpower.

ADEPT POWERS

ADRENALINE BOOST

Cost: 0.25 pp per level
Activation: Free Action

This power lets you accomplish more in one Combat Turn. You get +2 to your Initiative Score for the cur-

rent Combat Turn for every level of this power you have. At the beginning of the next turn after the Adrenaline Boost, you take Drain equal to the number of levels you have in this power.

ASTRAL PERCEPTION

Cost: 1 PP
Activation: Simple Action

This power allows you to bridge the gap between the physical and astral realms and see into the astral plane. Since you're dual-natured while you're using astral perception, you can attack astral forms when you use this power. Follow all the normal rules for astral perception (p. 312).

ATTRIBUTE BOOST (ATTRIBUTE)

Cost: 0.25 PP per level
Activation: Simple Action

You call upon inner strength to perform amazing physical feats beyond their normal abilities. Attribute Boost must be purchased for a specific Physical Attribute (Agility, Body, Reaction, or Strength); separate Attribute Boost powers may be bought for different attributes. This power cannot be purchased for a Mental or Special Attribute.

When you activate this power, make a Magic + Attribute Boost Rating Test. Each hit on this test boosts your attribute rating by 1, up to your augmented Attribute maximum. This only affects your dice pools; your Physical limit and Initiative ratings don't change with Attribute Boost. The boost lasts for a number of Combat Turns equal to twice the number of hits you get. When the boost runs out, you take Drain equal to the level of this power.

COMBAT SENSE

Cost: 0.5 PP per level

Combat Sense provides an instinctive sense of any potential threats nearby. In defending against ranged and melee attacks, you get a +1 dice pool bonus to defense tests per level of this power. Adepts with this power are always allowed a Perception Test before a possible surprise situation, gaining the benefit of being alerted if the test is successful.

CRITICAL STRIKE (SKILL)

Cost: 0.5 PP

This power improves a specific melee skill: either Unarmed Combat, Clubs, Blades, Astral Combat, or a particular Exotic Melee weapon skill. The specific skill is chosen when you buy the power. Increase the DV of your attacks with the selected skill by 1. Critical Strike is compatible with weapons and other adept powers. The power may be selected multiple times, each time for a different melee skill.

DANGER SENSE

Cost: 0.25 PP per level

You are instinctively sensitive of your surroundings and of impending threats that may not be immediately visible. It's the bad feeling that the character gets before walking into a trap, the gut instinct that makes them jump an instant before trouble hits. For each level of this power, you get +1 die on Surprise Tests.

ENHANCED PERCEPTION

Cost: 0.5 PP per level

This power sharpens all your senses. Add +1 die per level to all Perception Tests and Assensing Tests.

ENHANCED ACCURACY (SKILL)

Cost: 0.25 PP

A weapon in your hands becomes an extension of your body. When you buy this power, choose a Combat Skill (Pistols, Clubs, Heavy Weapons, etc.). When you use the skill, add 1 to the Accuracy of the weapon you're using. This power cannot be used with Unarmed Combat, but it can be purchased multiple times with a different skill each time.

IMPROVED ABILITY (SKILL)

Cost: 0.5 PP per level

This power increases the Rating of a specific Combat, Physical, Social, Technical, or Vehicle skill per level of the power. You need to know the skill in order to buy this power for it, and you can't buy it for skill groups. The maximum improvement possible is your current skill level x 1.5 (rounded up).

IMPROVED PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTE

Cost: 1 PP per level

This power allows you to increase a physical attribute (Body, Agility, Reaction, and Strength). This augments your attribute, so your Physical limit may also increase with the new Attribute rating. This power allows you to exceed your natural Attribute maximum, up to your augmented maximum.

IMPROVED POTENTIAL (LIMIT)

Cost: 0.5 PP per level

This power allows an adept to raise one of your inherent limits (Physical, Mental, or Social), specified when you buy the power, by 1. You may buy this power multiple times, once per inherent limit.

IMPROVED REFLEXES

Cost: Variable, see table

This power increases the speed at which you react, just like wired reflexes. For each level, you receive +1 to Reaction (this also affects Initiative) and +1D6 Initiative Die (to a maximum of 5D6). The maximum rating of Improved Reflexes is 3, and the increase cannot be combined with other technological or magical increases to Initiative.

IMPROVED REFLEXES TABLE

LEVEL	PP COST
Level 1	1.5
Level 2	2.5
Level 3	3.5

IMPROVED SENSE

Cost: 0.25 PP each

This power gives you sensory improvements not normally possessed by your character's metatype. These improvements may include low-light or thermographic vision, high or low frequency hearing, and so on. Any sense enhancement provided by cyberware or bioware can be provided by this power, unless that enhancement either gives you bonus dice to Perception Tests or needs wireless to work (or both).

In addition to the sensory enhancements listed for cyberware and bioware, other improvements that can be selected include:

Direction Sense: Add +2 dice to Navigational skill tests when traveling. In addition, with a Perception + Intuition (2) Test, you can identify the direction you're facing and if you're above or below the mean sea level.

Improved Tactile: The adept's fingers are sensitive to imperfections on the surface of an object, allowing you to notice something as subtle the indentation of writing on a piece of paper (even paper on a pad beneath the sheet that was actually written on). Add +2 dice to tactile Perception Tests.

Perfect Pitch: With a Perception + Intuition (2) Test, you can recognize a musical tone either from hearing it or even feeling the vibration frequency. This doesn't mean that you're a good singer, just that you can recognize when you're off key.

Human Scale: With a Perception + Intuition (2) Test, the adept can figure out the weight of an object down to the gram if he is able to lift or carry the object. Can be useful for carnival barkers and arcanoarchaeologists trying to figure out how much that statue they're trying to snatch off a pressure plate weighs.

KILLING HANDS

Cost: 0.5 PP

Activation: Free Action

This power lets you inflict lethal damage with your unarmed attacks. When inflicting damage on the target of an unarmed attack, you may choose whether to cause Stun or Physical damage. Killing Hands may be combined with other adept powers that increase unarmed damage. Your Killing Hands attacks are magical, so they can bypass a creature's magical defenses against attack, such as the Immunity to Normal Weapons power, and may be used by adepts with Astral Perception during astral combat.

KINESICS

Cost: 0.25 PP per level

Kinesics grants you complete control over your body's nonverbal and subconscious communication and social cues, even when you're in stressful social situations. It includes facial expressions, body movements, eye movements, fluctuations in heart rate and blood pressure, and even control over sweat glands, making it difficult to gauge your emotional state and truthfulness. Add +1 to resist Social Tests and tests to read your emotions like Judge Intentions, assensing, or truthfulness tests.

LIGHT BODY

Cost: 0.25 PP per level

Light Body is used to make incredible jumps over long distances. Add the power's level to your Agility before calculating maximum distance you can jump. Also, add 1 die per level to your Gymnastics Test when you make your jump. If you should happen to fall, reduce the effective distance of a fall by the level in meters when calculating your falling damage.

MISSILE PARRY

Cost: 0.25 PP per level

Activation: Interrupt Action (-5 from Initiative Score)

You can catch slow-moving projectiles such as arrows, thrown knives, grenades, or shuriken out of the air. When using this power, add +1 die per level to your defense pool against the attacker's ranged attack test. If you generate net hits, you pluck the missile out of the air. You need to have at least one empty hand to use Missile Party.

MYSTIC ARMOR

Cost: 0.5 PP per level

This power protects you from physical attacks. For every level, this power gives you 1 point of Armor (cumulative with other armor, but not adding to encumbrance) that also protects against damage you take in astral combat.

NATURAL IMMUNITY

Cost: 0.25 PP per level

Add +1 die per level to your tests to resist toxins and disease.

PAIN RESISTANCE

Cost: 0.5 PP per level

Pain resistance allows you to ignore the effects of injury (but not the actual damage). For every level of pain resistance, the wound modifiers on the Condition Monitor move one box farther down the chart, so that with 1 level of this power, you take the -1 penalty after 4 boxes of damage instead of 3. If you have 2 levels of the power, the penalty doesn't kick in until you have 5 boxes of damage. Pain Resistance works equally on the Physical and Stun Condition Monitors. Pain Resistance also allows you to resist pain from torture, magic, illness, etc. Each level adds +2 dice to any test you make to withstand suffering.

RAPID HEALING

Cost: 0.5 PP per level

You recover from damage more quickly, magically healing yourself over periods of time. Add +1 die per level to your Body for Healing Tests. Also add +1 die per level to any tests made to heal you through magical or mundane means (such as a Heal spell or the First Aid skill), whether the attempt is made by you or another character.

SPELL RESISTANCE

Cost: 0.5 PP per level

You are inherently resistant to spells. Add +1 die per level to Resistance Tests against spells, spell rituals, alchemical preparations, or Innate Spell critter power (but not other critter powers). Spell Resistance does not interfere with spells that you choose not to resist.

TRACELESS WALK

Cost: 1 PP

You can move over surfaces—even snow, sand, or thin paper—without leaving visible traces. You make no noise through contact with the floor (though movement may still cause other sounds), and any hearing-based Perception Tests to detect you suffer a -4 dice pool penalty. You don't trip ground-vibration or pressure sensors. You can't walk across liquid surfaces—you're magical, not miraculous—but you can walk across deep snow without sinking. While you can be tracked by non-visual cues such as scent, even those Track Tests are more difficult and get a -2 dice pool penalty.

VOICE CONTROL

Cost: 0.5 PP per level

You get an amazing level of control over the properties of your voice. You can change your voice's pitch, modulation and tone at will, as well as increase your volume. You can mask your voice and imitate sounds within the normal range of metahuman vocalization (no infrasound or ultrasound) and mimic the voices of others. If you use this trick to fool a person or a voice recognition system, make an Opposed Test using your Impersonation + Charisma [Mental] against the voice recognition system's Rating x 2, or against the Perception + Intuition of characters the adept is attempting to fool, adding the level of this power as a bonus to your dice pool.

You can also adjust your voice to generate positive social effects, giving you +1 per level to your Social limit.

WALL RUNNING

Cost: 0.5 PP

Activation: Simple Action

You can run up sheer walls or other vertical surfaces a limited distance. Make a Running + Strength [Magic] Test, with hits indicating the number of meters you may climb up in an action phase. If you want to run up longer distances, you'll need steps, ledges, or somewhere you can stop and then use this power again. If you want to run across a vertical surface instead of up it, you can do so by combining this power with a Sprint action (p. 162). At the end of your movement, you fall off the wall, whether you made it as far as you wanted or not.

THE ASTRAL WORLD

While the physical world is the world you interact with all the time, there is another world, invisible and unnoticed but indirectly influenced by the people wandering the material plane. This world is called the **astral plane.** It is an emotionally charged photonegative of the physical world where only living things and things infused with mana are real and physical objects are mere intangible shadows.

Mana, the essence of magic, flows through the astral plane, bridging the metaplanes to the physical world, fueled by the life force that exists in and on our planet. The general aura of that life illuminates the astral world at all times with an ambient glow. Things that exist only on the material plane can be seen and heard from the astral, but they are blurred and muted as the emotional context of people and things registers more than physical properties of light and sound (in many ways they are a substitution for those properties). Echoes of things-that-used-to-be cast shadows in the astral world with varying consistency based on the lasting emotions tied to objects and places. These echoes stand out more prominently in the astral world as the emotional context makes them more colorful or tangible.

AURAS & ASTRAL FORMS

Living things in general are not active on the astral plane but still cast a reflection of themselves there. This reflection is called an aura; it appears as a shining, vibrant, colorful luminescence. Any non-living objects appear as faded semblances of their physical selves; grey, lifeless, and intangible.

Anything active on the astral plane, including spirits, active foci, dual-natured beings, etc., has a tangible astral form. These forms are more colorful and brighter than auras, as they are astrally "real." The Earth has an astral form, and many regard this as proof that the planet as a whole is a living entity apart from (or made up of) the creatures that inhabit its surface.

ASTRAL SIGNATURE

Generally, when magicians cast a spell or perform a ritual, they leave their astral fingerprints on it. This is called an astral signature, and it's produced on anything affected by magic skills or abilities. This astral signature can be detected by anyone with the assensing skill. A signature lasts for a number of hours equal to the magical effect's Force after the effect (spell, critter power, astral battle, or whatever it was) ends, slowly fading into the background. An astral signature of a spell can be detected both where it was cast and where it took effect. Semi-permanent objects such as alchemical preparations and watchers contain an astral signature while they last. More permanent items such as foci, lodges, and circles always contain the astral signature of their owner.

A character can attempt to read an astral signature with an Assensing + Intuition [Astral] test. This is not the simplest task, as perceiving and understanding an astral signature is somewhat difficult amid the mixture of magic and emotional background of the astral plane. Once successfully read, a signature can be recognized again (possibly with a **Memory Test**, p. 152). Other details such as the general class of spell or spirit, or the skill of the magician, can be determined with net hits (see **Assensing** p. 142).

A magician using astral perception can "wipe clean" a temporary astral signature (such as from sorcery) or hasten its normal fading. A magician can spend a Complex Action to reduce the amount of time it takes for the signature to fade by 1 hour (mentally pushing the signature into the background energy, if you will). No test is required. This action can be done multiple times until the astral signature is gone. If the signature is not completely erased, it will be obvious to others assensing it that someone tampered with it.

Magical forensic investigators use astral signatures to gather information about criminal magicians, so be careful about leaving them behind where they are likely seen.

ASTRAL PERCEPTION

Many Awakened characters can perceive the astral plane from the physical world. This ability is called **astral perception.** It is a primary sense used in the astral plane that allows you to "see" auras and other things in the astral world overlaid on the material plane. Astral perception is available only to some; for metahumans you can only use astral perception if you're a magician, or an adept with the Astral Perception power. Technically, astral perception isn't vision—you don't need working eyes to see in the astral plane—but vision is the easiest metaphor to use.

With the skill of Assensing, you can interpret the "colors" and "brightness" of an aura to determine the wellness and state of being of the subject. When astrally perceiving, you become **dual-natured** (meaning you have presence in both the physical and astral planes simultaneously) and can interact with astral objects, including through combat. Astrally perceiving while trying to accomplish mundane tasks is very distracting; you take a -2 dice pool penalty to actions on the physical plane.

While astral perception allows an Awakened character to sense the astral plane, actually interpreting what you're looking at takes practice. Interpreting auras to gain information about the person or thing to which they belong is called Assensing. If you want to learn more about an aura, you may make a Simple Assensing + Intuition [Astral] Test, with the number of hits determining how much you learn (details are on the **Assensing Table**, p. 313). Without

ASSENSING TABLE

HITS	INFORMATION GAINED
0	None
1	The general state of the subject's health (healthy, injured, ill, etc.). The subject's general emotional state or impression (happy, sad, angry, etc.). Whether the subject is mundane or Awakened.
2	The presence and location of cyberware implants. The class of a magical subject (fire elemental, manipulation spell, power focus, curse ritual, and so on). If you have seen the subject's aura before, you may recognize it, regardless of physical disguises or alterations
3	The presence and location of alphaware cyber implants. Whether the subject's Essence and Magic are higher, lower, or equal to your own. Whether the subject's Force is higher, lower, or equal to your Magic. A general diagnosis for any maladies (diseases or toxins) the subject suffers. Any astral signatures present on the subject.
4	The presence and location of bioware implants and betaware cyber implants. The exact Essence, Magic, and Force of the subject. The general cause of any astral signature (combat spell, alchemical combat spell, air spirit, and so on).
5+	The presence and location of deltaware implants, gene treatments, and nanotech. An accurate diagnosis of any disease or toxins which afflict the subject. The fact that a subject is a technomancer.

attempting to read an aura, you can still get an impression of what type of aura it is (spell, ritual, spirit, living creature, foreboding horror from beyond all mortal ken, etc.).

Like physical perception, you don't need to make a test to see things that are immediately obvious (and since astral forms are bright and vibrant, this means that most astral forms are easy to spot). You only need to roll the dice when your target is trying to hide or when you're trying to observe in detail—then you make an Assensing Test to see what you can see.

Objects that are neither magical nor living do not have an aura; they are featureless grey shadows of their physical form. They can, however, pick up impressions for a limited time from being in contact with living auras. A teddy bear in the Barrens might pick up a child's fear, a wedding ring its owner's sense of love and joy, or a murder weapon an aura of rage. These impressions are vague and fleeting, but you don't need to assense the object to get them. Note that it's the object that picks up the impression—a trid display used at an oppressive desk job would give the sense of stress, even if it was displaying a love note.

ASTRAL PROJECTION

If astral perception is like sticking your face in a lake to peer below the surface, astral projection is diving right in. Your consciousness is contained in an astral form and can leave your corporeal body. Your astral form is a mental projection of your self image combined with physical characteristics based on your mental attributes, which means you can always have awesome hair.

A projecting mage can travel around the astral plane at great speeds unimpeded by material objects such as walls, floors, and burly goons (unless they are dual-natured). Your body is in a coma-like state while your astral body is out in the aether. Your mind and body are still connected, so any damage taken to body or mind is felt by both. Only characters who are full Magicians can astrally project.

You're using astral perception the entire time you're projecting, so you can see the auras of living things. Auras alone don't give you the mystic link you need to target spells. As the saying goes, what's cast in astral space stays in astral space, and ditto for physical space.

ASTRAL MOVEMENT

Astral forms can move almost at the speed of thought. The magician only needs to imagine himself at a place and his astral body travels there. Any nearby places can be reached in seconds, minutes for locations on the same continent, hours to get anywhere on the globe. At this speed however, you have no time to perceive the environment, and things you pass are a blur (think warp speed in movies). Astral barriers block astral trav-

el, and you might run into one before you realize that it's in your way.

If you're looking for a particular place or thing, you must travel at a slower pace. "Slower" in this case means up to 100 meters each Combat Turn—this is considered to be the Walking rate in astral space. Moving faster, 5 kilometers per Combat Turn, is your Running rate—the normal penalties to actions for Running apply in these cases.

Astral forms can move in any direction—they are not limited by gravity as they are in the physical world, though most projecting magicians tend to stick close to the ground because that's where most of the interesting stuff is, if not out of force of habit. The exception to this freedom of movement is at the limits of the Earthly atmosphere (about eighty kilometers up)—the Gaiasphere weakens to the point where astral voyagers usually go mad or die.

Only astral forms can slow or affect another astral form. The Earth is solid on the astral plane, just as it is in the physical world; astral forms cannot pass through it. Secure facilities are often built underground to keep out astral intruders. Active weapon foci have a presence in astral space and can harm an astral form (see **Foci**, p. 318), but you must be present on the astral plane to use the focus in astral combat. Only mana spells affect astral forms.

MANIFESTING

A purely astral form such as a spirit or an astrally projecting magician can interact with the physical plane by manifesting. Manifesting is a psychic effect that lets you make yourself visible and audible on the physical plane through an act of will. Manifesting takes a Complex Action to engage or disengage. You appear on the physical plane as a ghostly, hazy image of your astral form and may freely communicate with physical characters. Unlike the Materialization power of spirits (p. 314), manifesting doesn't give you a physical form, so you can't interact with anything physically (or be harmed by physical attacks). It's a psychic connection, so you can't cast spells on targets on the physical plane while you're manifesting. For the same reason, technological devices can't detect or record you. You're still on the astral plane, so astral attacks can still target you. Manifesting is pretty taxing, so you can only manifest for a total of your Magic Rating x 5 minutes per astral projection session.

STAYING ASTRAL

It's mentally taxing to stay on the astral plane for a long time. You can use astral projection for a number of hours equal to your Magic Rating x 2. If you stay out longer, your astral being ceases to exist and your body dies. This might make spotting rituals more difficult to complete (the time limit, that is—death makes everything more complex). If you return to your body, this clock stops, but it doesn't reset until you've spent at least as long in your body as you spent out of it.

ASTRAL ATTRIBUTES TABLE

PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTE	ASTRAL ATTRIBUTE
Agility	Logic
Body	Willpower
Reaction	Intuition
Strength	Charisma
Astra Initiative	Intuition x 2
Initiative Dice	+2D6 (3D6 total)

ASTRAL DETECTION

Physical beings may sense when an astral form passes through their aura. Make a Perception + Intuition (4) [Mental] Test—you receive a +2 dice pool bonus if you're Awakened. If the test is successful, the character feels slightly breathless, and they experience a chill or tingling sensation from the passing of the astral form. Security personnel are trained to recognize this feeling as a sign of an astral intruder. This specialization of Perception is called Numinous Perception, which includes both the chilly tingle of astral forms and the "bad vibes" of noticing magic (p. 280).

WHILE YOU WERE OUT

When a magician is astrally projecting, her mind has stepped out for the moment. Mental detection and manipulation spells targeting the physical body of an astrally projecting mage simply do not work, although other spells do. Although if you really want to mess up a magician without killing her, you can move her body away from where she left it.

Magicians hate playing hide and seek with their own body. If someone moves your body away from where you expected it to be, you'll have to search for it. If that happens, make an Assensing + Intuition [Astral] (1 hour) Extended Test. The threshold should be determined by the gamemaster based on how far your body was moved and how well it was hidden.

ASTRAL COMBAT

Astral combat is resolved in the same way as physical combat. Astrally perceiving and dual-natured characters use their physical attributes and skills to fight opponents with a physical body, and their Astral Combat + Willpower to fight wholly astral entities. Astrally projecting characters use their mental attributes in place of physical ones (see **Astral Attributes Table**) along with the Astral Combat skill. There are no ranged weapons that function in astral space, so unarmed attacks, active weapon foci, and mana spells are the only options for astral combat.

Unarmed astral attacks are an performed through an Opposed Astral Combat + Willpower [Astral] v. Intuition + Logic Test. Astral attacks with a weapon focus are an Opposed Astral Combat + Willpower [Accuracy] v. Intuition + Logic Test. Base Damage Values are listed on the **Astral Damage Table**; add 1 to the DV per net hit on an attack. Damage inflicted from astral combat can be either Stun or Physical (attacker's choice). Astral barriers can only be affected by Physical damage.

ASTRAL DAMAGE TABLE

ATTACK	TEST
Unarmed	Astral Combat + Willpower [Astral] v. Intuition + Logic
Weapon Focus	Astral Combat + Willpower [Accuracy] v. Intuition + Logic
TYPE	**DAMAGE**
Magician	Charisma
Weapon Focus	by weapon (using Charisma instead of Strength)
Spirit	Force
Watcher	1

ASTRAL TRACKING

Nearly all magical things (spirits, spells, foci, and magical lodges) have an astral link to whoever was responsible for them. Active spells are linked to their casters, spirits are linked to their summoners, astrally projecting magicians are linked to their physical bodies, and foci and magical lodges are linked to the magicians who activated them. Awakened entities who assense the astral signature of these astral forms can track their links through the astral plane back to their sources. Following an astral link requires an Assensing + Intuition (5,1 hour) [Astral] Extended Test modified as noted on the **Astral Tracking Modifiers** table.

ASTRAL TRACKING MODIFIERS

CONDITION	THRESHOLD MODIFIER
Each hour passed since astral link was active	+1
Target behind mana barrier	+ (Force of barrier)
Tracking master by spirit:	
Bound spirit	+0
Unbound spirit	+2

MANA BARRIERS

Mana barriers are magical walls that impede or block magic and astral forms. Mana barriers can be on the physical or astral planes, but some are dual-natured barriers that exist on both. The Mana Barriers table lists the different ways to create a mana barrier contained in this book.

Mana barriers on the physical plane are invisible (except to astral perception), but they act as solid barriers to spells, manifesting entities, spirits, and active foci. Anybody trying to cast a spell through a barrier must contend with the Force of the barrier, which is added to the Defense or the Resistance dice pool. If the spell doesn't normally have an opposed dice pool, the Spellcasting test becomes an Opposed Test against the Force of the barrier.

Mana barriers on the astral plane are solid, hazily opaque walls. Such barriers stop astral movement and impose a visual penalty equal to the barrier's Force. Astral mana barriers are resistant to astral spells as well as other astral forms, in the same manner as physical mana barriers.

Dual-natured mana barriers are active on both planes simultaneously, and they act like mana barriers on both planes at once.

Adept powers and many always-on critter powers are innate and so are unaffected by a barrier. The gam-

MANA BARRIERS TABLE

MANA BARRIER	ASTRAL OR PHYSICAL	REFERENCE
Circle of Protection ritual	Both	p. 298
Magical Lodge	Both	p. 280
Mana Barrier spell	Either	p. 294
Ward ritual	Both	p. 297

emaster has the option to have certain ranged and sustained critter powers (such as Concealment or Movement) suffer the same fate as spells.

Mana barriers do not affect their creators, who can see through them or pass through them at will and allow others to do so as well.

GETTING AROUND MANA BARRIERS

If you've got a mana barrier in your way, you've got a couple options other than "give up." You can try breaking through violently, or you can try passing through subtly.

If you want to break through a mana barrier, you need to deal with its Armor and Structure Ratings, just as you would with any other barrier. A mana barrier has Armor and Structure ratings equal to its Force. Break it quickly, because they regain their full Structure at the end of every Combat Turn. The creator of a mana barrier is instantly aware of any attack on the barrier.

Awakened characters have discovered other methods of forcing their way through an astral barrier besides the use of brute force. You can press through a barrier with a Magic + Charisma [Astral] v. barrier's Force x 2 Opposed Test. If you get any net hits, you pass through the barrier and emerge on the other side. You can bring a number of friends, spirits, active foci, sustained spells, or other astral forms with you, one for each net hit you score. If the barrier scores more hits, you fail to break through.

ASTRAL INTERSECTIONS

Mana barriers and astral forms are often tied to physical objects. Astral beings can't push physical objects around, so objects may get dragged into contact with barriers or (rarely) other astral constructs. For example, a van protected with a mana barrier can drive into a warded garage, an astrally perceiving magician can ride an elevator into a warded basement, or a spell focus amulet could be placed inside a spirit focus box.

If this happens, each astral form makes an Opposed Test: living beings a Magic + Charisma, and non-living barriers and objects a Force x 2 test. The participant with any net hits remains normal and intact, while all others are disrupted—on a tie, all participants are disrupted.

Disruption means different consequences for different things. Disrupted spells and rituals end, disrupted preparations lose their spell and become mundane, disrupted mana barriers collapse, disrupted foci deactivate, disrupted spirits are banished, and disrupted living creatures are knocked unconscious with a full Stun Condition Monitor. Any permanent mana barrier that is disrupted regains all its Structure at the end of the Combat Turn.

REAGENTS

Mana flows through the world and collects on objects like sediment on a seabed. Like the magical world itself, the mana in these objects waxes and wanes. If such objects are found and harvested at the right time by a skilled person, they become reagents. Reagents are sensitive to pollution and emotion, just like the astral plane, which makes the challenging task of harvesting reagents even more difficult in many areas.

Reagents have a higher inherent concentration of mana than normal substances, but they are otherwise identical to their mundane counterparts. The power of a set of reagents is measured in drams of **orichalcum**, or simply drams, an imprecise but useful comparison to the power in the magical material known as orichalcum. Orichalcum is the purest reagent known, chunks of metal that are perfect mana conduits. A reagent that is worth a single dram of orichalcum usually weighs more than the traditional 1.77 grams, but is usually still fairly small and tends to weigh less than 5 grams (less than the weight of a pistol bullet). This means that a single object as light as 25 grams can be worth 5 drams of reagents.

Reagents come in all types and forms. Orichalcum can be created through Alchemy, but it's a lengthy process that will be covered in a separate book. Naturally occurring reagents vary by tradition. Hermetic magicians prefer minerals, pure elements, old trinkets, and virgin ores. Shamans favor parts of plants and animals, naturally polished rocks, and small, intricately crafted handmade items. A Rastafarian might be able to find magic in a coin from a street musician's instrument case, while an aspected magician might seek natural items that are harvested under a certain moon.

Reagents are surprisingly common, but not all reagents can be used by every tradition. The cube of cinnabar that the hermetic magician values is useless to a shaman, just as the shaman's bundle of feathers is of little interest to the magician. Generally speaking, the reagents from one tradition only work at half strength to magicians of other traditions. This makes trading in reagents a tricky proposition to anyone not versed in the fine art of talismongering.

Reagents are almost as versatile as mana itself. When you spend a reagent, the mana it stores dissipates, which means it ceases to be a reagent, even if its physical form remains intact. Here's a quick rundown of the many uses of reagents.

Alchemical Preparations: You can spend reagents to set the limit for Alchemy when making a preparation. Rather than the spell's Force, the limit becomes the number of drams spent on the limit.

Artificing: You need to spend reagents to create foci.

Banishing: You can spend reagents to set the limit for Banishing. Rather than your Astral limit, the limit becomes the number of drams of reagents spent. You can spend reagents to change the limit for Banishing.

THE METAPLANES

The metaplanes, also known as upper, lower, outer, or simply "the planes" are as enigmatic as the spirits that reside there. The envisioned appearance of the metaplanes is as diverse as the traditions of magicians. Some say there's just one large plane, like the astral plane with different regions. Others say there's an infinite number of metaplanes, each as unique as the magician who thought of it. In any case, for each type of spirit known to metahumanity, there is at least one metaplane associated with it.

Travel to the metaplanes involves entering realms very different from our own reality, with rules and rulers who are inhuman, unpredictable, and eccentric. Astral travelers have documented a myriad of metaplanar realms, and more are discovered with each passing year. If they send their players on a metaplanar quest, gamemasters should feel free to make the planes different than reality in odd and disturbing ways. The surroundings are odd and not bound by normal physical laws, and the populations of the metaplanes are not human and are not bound by normal human desires and motivations. The metaplanes should be surprising, keeping players off-balance but entertained.

DWELLER ON THE THRESHOLD

Between the Astral realm and the metaplanes exists the entity known as The Dweller on the Threshold. The Dweller on the Threshold, according to some, is nothing more than the subconscious of the magician, waiting to challenge him in his understanding of himself (a self-evaluation, if you will). Others contend that the Dweller is a greater spirit than any magician has ever fathomed who guards the divide between the metaplanes and the material plane. In any case, the Dweller challenges any magician who wishes to travel the metaplanes with some mental or physical challenge. The gamemaster should devise a challenge, which can be as simple as an immediate combat or as complicated as a long quest, that tests the players' strengths and weaknesses.

Binding: You have to spend reagents in order to bind a spirit.

Counterspelling: You can spend reagents to set the limit for Counterspelling. Rather than your Astral limit, the limit becomes the number of drams of reagents spent.

Disjoining: You can spend reagents to set the limit for disjoining. Rather than your Astral limit, the limit becomes the number of drams of reagents spent.

Ritual Spellcasting: As part of the offering step, you can spend reagents to offset Drain in Ritual Spellcasting (see **Ritual Spellcasting**, p. 295).

Spellcasting: In a pinch, you can spend reagents to set the limit for Spellcasting. Rather than using the spell's Force as the limit, use the number of drams of reagents spent.

Summoning: You can spend reagents to set the limit for Summoning. Rather than the spirit's Force, the limit becomes the number of drams of reagents spent.

Temporary Magical Lodge: You can create a temporary magical lodge by spending a number of drams of reagents equal to Force of the lodge. The lodge takes one hour per point of Force to create and thereafter lasts until sunrise or sunset, whichever comes first.

BREAKING MANA BARRIERS: GOING TO THE SOURCE

Another violent option for breaking through mana barriers is to destroy the basis for the barrier. Magical lodges can be broken up or burned, ritual anchors can be torn up or moved, and spellcasters who are sustaining a mana barrier spell can be whacked. In these cases, the barrier's creator feels the barrier going down (especially true in the case of geeking a magician).

HARVESTING REAGENTS

The easiest way to get reagents of your own tradition is to buy them. Your local talismonger can sell them to you at 20 nuyen per dram. If you are versed in Alchemy, you can collect them yourself and cut out the middleman—here's how.

First, it's best if you're in an environment suited to your tradition; such environments are listed in the description of your tradition. It is not necessary to be in the right place to gather reagents, but it makes the job easier. Next, you must be using Astral Perception to watch the flow of mana while still interacting with the physical world. After you have spent a full hour searching for reagents, make an Alchemy + Magic [Mental] test. You gather one dram of reagents for every 2 hits on this test if you're working in an area suited to your tradition, one dram every 4 hits if you're not.

If there is an occasion where shadowrunning leaves you in the position to gather reagents—after, say, killing a dragon—you can try to gather what you can. You still have to spend an hour, same as normal (rummaging around in the dragon's guts, if we're staying with the example) to see what can be salvaged, then make the Alchemy + Magic [Mental] test and harvest what you can.

Gathering reagents taps out a location for a period of time. For every dram of reagents harvested, it takes two days for the area (roughly a hectare) to be viable for

harvesting reagents again. This can be particularly problematic when magicians and talismongers fight over the same turf.

EXAMPLE

Abbi Kadabra is doing a little shopping for reagents along an old railway. She finds a spot where the newer asphalt ends, exposing the old gravel near the rails and mana flows smoothly. Her Magic Rating is 5, her Alchemy skill is 5, and she has a Mental limit of 7. She rolls three successes; this means that after an hour, she unfortunately finds only 1 worn stone that has become useful as a reagent. She'll have to come back in 2 days to try and find some more.

As she walks down the rails back to her car, she is confronted by a mage who believes that she's on his turf. She doesn't want to deal with it as she's got an important meeting to go to soon. Abbi pulls out a bag of reagents and casts Clout at Force 5 while spending 10 reagents. Her Spellcasting skill is at an impressive 6, and she lucks out with an amazing roll of 8 successes. Because of the reagents the spellcasting limit was raised to 10, so all the successes counted in the spell. The opposing mage, who only had only armored clothing, never saw what hit him.

As the now-unconscious mage drools senselessly in the alley, Abbi is upset that she used up the reagent that she just picked up. She rummages through his pockets and finds 4 reagents. Because they are of the same tradition, Abbi can use all of them (if not, she'd only be able to use 2). She takes them all, then kicks the out-of-it mage for good measure.

FOCI

Foci (singular: **focus**) are more than mundane items with a dusting of mana to give them potency. They are astral constructs embedded within physical objects. When active the design of the astral construct pools mana energy so that the magician it is bonded to can draw upon it for a specific magical task. The physical form of a focus varies—bracelets, amulets, belts, wands, walking sticks, staves, cups, bottle caps, daggers, hats, hip flasks, pens, and so on and so forth—although most of the time a focus reflects the tradition of its maker. Foci have a Force rating that measures their power.

You can't use a focus unless you've bonded it to yourself (and you can't bond foci unless you're Awakened). The amount of Karma required to bond a focus is different for each focus, listed on the Focus Table. Bonding a focus takes an hour per Force of the focus, spent contemplating the object and synchronizing its astral signature to yours. Once you've spent the Karma and the time, the focus's power is available to you. A focus can only be bound to one person at a time—the bonding process breaks the bond with the focus's previous owner (if it had one).

Each focus has a specific power (described under **Focus Types**) and must be active for you to use it. Activating a focus is a Simple Action. For a focus to remain active, it must be in the possession of the magician (worn, carried, hand-held, in a pocket or pouch, etc). Likewise, if you lose consciousness your foci deactivate. If you lose possession of a focus, it automatically deactivates and you lose all its benefits until you recover it and activate it again. You can deactivate a focus at any time with a Free Action.

All foci have auras that are visible from astral space and carry your astral signature (p. 312). While activated, a focus also has an astral form. If you use astral projection, you also carry the astral form of any active foci you have. If you deactivate a focus while you're projecting, its astral form disappears and you'll need to go back to your body to reactivate it.

You can't bond more foci than your Magic attribute, and the maximum Force of all your bonded foci can't exceed your Magic x 5. Regardless of the number of bonded foci you have, only one focus may add its Force to a dice pool for any given test.

FOCUS TABLE

ITEM	BONDING COST (IN KARMA)
Enchanting Focus	Force x 3
Metamagic Focus	Force x 3
Power Focus	Force x 6
Qi Focus	Force x 2
Spell Focus	Force x 2
Spirit Focus	Force x 2
Weapon Focus	Force x 3

FOCUS TYPES

There are seven categories of foci: Enchanting, Metamagic, Power, Qi, Spell, Spirit, and Weapon. Foci have the same cost as other foci in their category, but they don't all have the same effect.

ENCHANTING FOCI

Alchemical focus: An alchemical focus adds its Force in dice to any Alchemical skill tests.

QI FOCI: YANTRA TATTOOS

Here are a few examples of qi foci from the Tantric tradition. These yantra tattoos are quite popular among young adepts, partly because they're effective, partly because it's hard to remove, but mostly because they look pretty badass.

Panchamukhee (five Deva faces): The five faces are arranged in a circle to to ward off illness and danger, making this focus perfect for Natural Immunity.

Ha Taew (five rows): This Enhanced Accuracy focus is usually tattooed on the left shoulder blade. Each of the five lines relates to a different blessing for success and good luck.

Kao Yord (nine spires): This Improved Physical Attribute (Body) qi focus is typically tattooed on the center top of the back in various sizes and levels of complexity.

Paed Tidt (eight points): Represents protection in an eight-pointed figure denoting the eight directions of the universe. It is round in shape, typically tattooed on the center of the back, and used for the Spell Resistance power.

Sip Tidt (ten points): A ten-pointed version of Paed Tidt that protects in ten directions instead of eight. Often used for Mystic Armor

Suea (tiger): This Killing Hands focus depicts a tiger, or more often twin tigers, surrounded by script.

Yord Mongkut (spired crown): This round Combat Sense qi focus is usually tattooed on the top of the head.

Disenchanting focus: When a disenchanting focus is in contact with another artifact, the magician can add dice equal to its Force to the Disenchanting Test.

METAMAGIC FOCI

Metamagic foci are advanced type foci designed to support initiates and the higher forms of magic they've learned. Metamagic foci add their force to the magician's initiate grade when using specific metamagics.

Centering focus: A centering focus adds its Force to the magician's initiate grade when he uses the centering metamagic on Drain Resistance Tests.

Flexible signature focus: A flexible signature focus adds its Force to your grade when increasing the threshold of observers' Assensing Tests.

Masking focus: When resisting someone else's Assensing Test, add the Force of this focus to your dice pool. It does not increase the number of bonded foci you can mask.

Spell shaping focus: Treat your Magic rating as if it was increased by the Force of this focus when determining how much you can shape your spells.

POWER FOCI

Power foci live up to their name. They are very powerful foci that temporarily increase your effective Magic rating. That means they add to your Sorcery, Conjuring, and Enchanting dice pools, along with any other test where Magic is involved. Power foci can take any form, but for some reason, rings and amulets are quite popular.

QI FOCI

Qi (pronounced "chee") foci only work for adepts. They channel mana into your adept powers. A qi focus can be an object, like other foci, but it can also be worked into a body modification, like tattoos, ritual scarring, and piercings. Each focus is specific to a single adept power at a specific level. While the focus is active, you get the power contained in it, or if you already have the power the focus's levels are added to your own (if it's a power with levels, that is; otherwise there's no benefit for you). The Force of the focus must be four times the Power Point cost of the power it holds, so a Level 1 Improved Ability (Unarmed Combat) qi focus is a Force 2 focus, while a Level 1 Improved Reflexes focus is Force 6 if you do not have Power Point of your own in the power, or Force 4 if you already have levels of your own.

FOCUS ADDICTION

If you rely too much on the power granted by foci, you might form a mental and spiritual dependence on them (**Substance Abuse and Addiction** p. 413). Typically, it's not a danger as long as the total Force of your active foci isn't greater than your Magic rating. If you do get hooked, you might find you need to bond more powerful foci, or have trouble deactivating them. In more severe cases, you might become psychologically unable to practice magic without a focus.

SPELL FOCI

Spell foci empower Sorcery skills. Each spell focus is attuned to one of the five category of spells or rituals (Combat, Detection, Illusion, Healing, and Manipulation) when it is created and cannot be changed. There are four types of spell foci.

Counterspelling: Counterspelling foci add dice equal to their Force to any Counterspelling attempt, as long as the countered spell is in the same category as the focus. It also adds its Force to your spell defense pool.

Ritual Spellcasting: A ritual spellcasting focus adds its Force in dice to your Ritual Spellcasting Tests (whether you're the leader or a participant). If the ritual isn't a spell ritual, this focus can be used, but if it's a spell ritual of a different category than the focus, it can't.

Spellcasting: Spellcasting foci add their force to your Spellcasting dice pool as long as the spell is in the same category as the focus.

Sustaining: When you cast a spell through a sustaining focus, it sustains the spell for you, letting you avoid the dice pool penalty for sustaining a spell. A spell sustained by a sustaining focus cannot have a Force greater than that of the focus, and the spell's category must match the focus's category. If a spell sustained by a focus is disrupted, it ends, but the focus is still active (and still bound to its owner), it's just not sustaining a spell at the moment. A sustaining focus can't be used to sustain a spell ritual.

SPIRIT FOCI

Spirit foci empower a magician's conjuring skills. Each spirit focus must be attuned to a specific type of spirit.

Summoning: A summoning focus adds dice equal to its Force to summoning attempts as long as the targeted spirit is in the same category as the focus.

Banishing: The banishing focus adds its Force to the limit of a magician's Banishing Test as long as the target spirit is in the same category as the focus.

Binding: A binding focus helps a magician tie a spirit to him. The focus adds its Force in dice to a magician's Binding Test as long as the spirit is in the same category as the focus.

WEAPON FOCI

A weapon focus always has, unsurprisingly, the form of a melee weapon. It adds magical power to the melee attacks you make with it. When used in physical combat, it gives you its Force as a dice pool bonus on your melee Attack Test. You still rely on your Physical Attributes and skills in combat; the weapon focus merely makes you more effective.

A weapon focus is effective against astral forms too, whether you're using astral perception or projection. It adds its Force to your Astral Combat Tests when you're using it, and you can take it along while astrally projecting. The damage of the weapon in astral combat is the same as it is in the physical world, except that you can decide between Stun or Physical damage (**Astral Combat,** p. 315).

MENTOR SPIRITS

In the search for magical enlightenment, affiliation, or purpose, many Awakened individuals are drawn toward certain animals, mythological figures, or concepts. This may be an idol they grew up with, a tribal totem, or something they look up to achieve in their life. It could also relate to their religious or magical beliefs. So strong are the feelings for this person or idea that once the individual Awakens, the idea takes a life on its own. It becomes what is known as a mentor spirit.

This mentor spirit is much like other spirits in that it has its own personality, but it's not a spirit in the summon-and-banish sense of the term. It can be seen and heard by those it chooses, and even physically interact with its followers. Your mentor spirit can have significant influence over you, giving you benefits when you remain true or punishing you if you go astray (usually with temporary reductions to your Magic rating).

Magical mentorship can come in different forms. Often you have your own link to your mentor spirit, but an Awakened guild or society can become linked to a mentor spirit as a group.

There is no real understanding of the nature of mentor spirits, but their general goal is clear: They want to keep Awakened individuals on the path that helped introduce the mentor spirit to the Earth in the first place. For gamemasters, mentor spirits can be used as a tool to communicate information to the magician and enhance role-playing. The mentor spirit can provide cryptic clues, riddles, omens, and sometimes even straightforward advice. Any Awakened character can connect with a mentor spirit by taking the Mentor Spirit quality (p. 76). Gamemasters may also choose to award mentor spirits in the course of role playing, provided the player character has done enough to deserve it.

MENTOR SPIRIT ARCHETYPES

Each of the mentor spirits listed here represents an archetype. These archetypes are idealized as totem animals, deities, and forces of nature by different cultures and traditions. The archetypes listed below serve merely as examples of different archetypes and are not meant to apply to all cultures—a totem animal considered a healer in one culture may be considered a deceiver in another. Additional archetypes will be presented in future sourcebooks, and you can always work with your gamemaster to develop a mentor spirit archetype that best fits your character's outlook.

Each archetype offers three advantages: one general bonus, one bonus that applies only to magicians, and one that applies only to adepts. Mystic adepts must chose either the adept or magician advantage at the time they accept the mentor spirit and can't change it.

EXAMPLE

Sometimes magicians seek out mentor spirits, but more often mentor spirits call to their people. Here are a couple of examples.

Kato, an adept with an emphasis in the martial arts, has been relentlessly training to break through the plateau of skill on which she has been stuck. She seeks out Thunderbird to help her increase her abilities. One day as she trains, a brightly colored butterfly flits in front of her and she hears—or feels—the words, "The fastest flight is with the wind." She understands and uses her surroundings in her training, heeding the advice from her mentor spirit and becoming more skilled in her arts.

Falsey is an agoraphobic magician who has been increasingly homebound, spending more and more time playing an AR fantasy role-playing game. He starts seeing increasing numbers of "special quests" that no one else has heard of, all involving leaving his apartment and going to a nearby beach. He avoids these quests, but at one point he finds himself talking to a graphic game character, water spirit. The next thing he knows, the spirit is in his apartment and physically pushing him toward the door of his home. Falsey's mentor spirit, the Sea, has decided to stop messing around and bring him to the beach for a good long talk.

Each also has a disadvantage and some alternate names or concepts for the mentor spirit, if you don't feel the given name really fits your tradition. Advantages and disadvantages apply at all times.

BEAR

This mentor symbolizes strength and protection. He is a healer and cannot turn down those in need without good reason, and he defends those under his care. Bear is more than a gentle healer; he is a ferocious protector, disregarding his own safety in combat if wounded or if someone he is protecting is injured.

ADVANTAGES

All: +2 dice for tests to resist damage (not including Drain)

Magician: +2 dice for health spells, preparations, and health spell rituals

Adept: 1 free level of Rapid Healing

DISADVANTAGES

You might go berserk when you take Physical damage in combat or if someone under your care is badly injured. Make a Simple Charisma + Willpower Test (wound modifiers apply). You go berserk for 3 turns minus 1 turn per hit, so 3 or more hits averts the berserk rage entirely. If you're already going berserk, increase the duration. When you're berserk, you go after your attacker(s) without regard for your own safety. If you incapacitate the target(s) before the time is up, the berserk fury dissipates.

Similar Archetypes: Strength, Protection

CAT

Cat is honored in cultures around the world. Cat is often seen as the guardian of mystical secrets, including those involving the afterlife. She certainly knows many secrets but rarely decides to share them, and never with anyone who is not worthy. She is stealthy, sly, and arrogant. Cat toys with her prey—threatening, taunting, and confusing her targets—rather than going directly for the kill.

ADVANTAGES

All: +2 dice to either Gymnastics or Infiltration Tests (choose one)

Magician: +2 dice for illusion spells, preparations, and illusion spell rituals

Adept: 2 free levels of Light Body

DISADVANTAGES

Cat magicians toy with their prey. Unless you succeed in a Charisma + Willpower (3) Test at the start of combat, you cannot make an attack that incapacitates your target. If you take any Physical damage, all this playing around stops.

Similar Archetypes: Mystery, Stealth

DOG

Dog is a loyal friend. He fights ferociously to defend his home and those under his protection. Dog protects people from harmful magic and dangerous spirits. Dog is loyal, generous, and helpful to those who show him kindness. He is single-minded, often to the point of stubbornness.

ADVANTAGES

All: +2 dice for Tracking tests

Magician: +2 dice for Detection spells, preparations, and rituals.

Adept: 2 free Improved Sense powers.

DISADVANTAGES

A Dog magician is stubbornly loyal. You can never leave someone behind, betray your comrades, or let another sacrifice themselves in your place without making a successful Charisma + Willpower (3) Test.

Similar Archetypes: Friendship, Loyalty

DRAGONSLAYER

This most heroic of mentor spirits is also the most fun loving. Though he fights to protect his own against all dangers, he loves a good party even more. He is a

THE DARKER SIDE OF MENTOR SPIRITS

Some say that mentor spirits are merely forces of nature. Some say that they are entities in their own right, guiding their chosen Awakened like loving parents. Some say that there is no single Bear or Eagle spirit, but that there are many such spirits who are called the same name by ignorant mortals. Everyone agrees that mentor spirits have no direct control over the physical world.

Or do they? Many report that mentor spirits are more than active in our world. Nearly everyone affiliated with a mentor spirit has heard their voice, or seen them. They sometimes appear like shamanic masks on the faces of magicians and adepts who perform great feats of magic. And they do seem to have an agenda.

It is said that those of the Awakened who dabble with tainted magics—reagents made with human bones, rituals performed in polluted areas, spells laced with negative emotions—may attract twisted mentor spirits or awaken the darker twin of their own mentor spirit. They say these mentor spirits lead the Awakened down a dark path with enticements of power.

Or maybe it's all just a ghost story. Only your gamemaster knows for certain, and she'd never make life tough for your character ... would she?

big brother who takes a friendly interest in everything his family does. Though sometimes naïve, he makes a staunch friend and a deadly enemy. The dragons he slays have changed with the times: current beasts include crime, pollution, corruption, and of course, actual dragons. Dragonslayer fights hard and plays hard. Once he has given his oath, he never breaks it. A Dragonslayer magician behaves with honor and respect, and demands the same from those around him.

ADVANTAGES

All: +2 dice pool modifier for one social skill of choice

Magician: +2 dice for Combat spells, preparations, and rituals.

Adept: 1 free level of Enhanced Accuracy (skill) and 1 free level of Danger Sense

DISADVANTAGES

If you break a promise, whether by choice or by accident, you take a -1 dice pool modifier to all actions until you make good on your promise.

Similar Archetypes: Heroism, Adventure

EAGLE

Eagle is the highest-flying bird in the sky, considered the most noble by many cultures. He is proud and solitary, and sees everything happening in the world below. Eagles are noble defenders of the purity of nature. They are intolerant of those who do not share their views and have a strong distrust of technology and its tools. Those who damage nature are Eagle's enemies, and Eagle will brave great danger to defeat polluters and other evildoers.

ADVANTAGES

All: +2 dice to Perception Tests

Magician: +2 dice for summoning spirits of air

Adept: 1 free level of Combat Sense

DISADVANTAGES

You get the Allergy (pollutants, mild) quality (p. 322; no bonus Karma for this negative quality).

Similar Archetypes: Nature, Warding

FIRE-BRINGER

The Fire-Bringer stole the secret of fire from the heavens and gave it to metahumanity as a gift and a tool. He is a figure of kindness and concern, but his good intentions sometimes get him into trouble and his plans may fail to work out the way he envisions them. He is a shaper and a creator, forming new things from the primal clay and breathing the fiery spark of life into them. Fire-Bringers devote themselves to the betterment of others, even at their own expense. Most followers of Fire-Bringer throw themselves into a particular cause with great zeal.

ADVANTAGES

All: +2 dice to Artisan skill tests or Alchemy skill tests (choose one)

Magician: +2 dice for spells, preparations, and spell rituals in the Manipulation category.

Adept: 1 free level of Improved Ability on a non-combat skill

DISADVANTAGES

When someone sincerely asks you for help, you can't refuse without succeeding in a Simple Charisma + Willpower (3) Test.

Similar Archetypes: Invention, Generosity

MOUNTAIN

Mountain is rooted in the very heart of the Earth but reaches toward lofty heights. She has limitless strength and endurance, but Mountain's inflexible nature limits her. Mountain is a stubborn and unyielding force, and Mountain magicians are difficult to persuade once they have made up their minds about something.

ADVANTAGES

All: +2 dice to Survival Tests

Magician: +2 dice for Counterspelling Tests and anchored rituals

Adept: 1 free level of Mystic Armor

DISADVANTAGES

When a Mountain magician makes a plan, she sticks to it. You must make a Charisma + Willpower (3) Test to

abandon a planned course of action in favor of a new one. If you fail, you must endeavor to continue with your original plan, even if it means going on alone. Similarly, you must succeed in a Charisma + Willpower (3) Test to proceed in anything *without* a plan.

Similar Archetypes: Endurance, Stubbornness

RAT

Rat is found wherever humans and the things they discard are, for what other bounty can sustain him? Rat is a scavenger, a stealthy thief who takes what he needs to survive. He dislikes working out in the open, preferring to stick to the shadows. Rat avoids fights whenever he can—when he must fight, he fights to kill quickly and move on.

ADVANTAGES

All: +2 dice for Sneaking Tests

Magician: +2 dice to Alchemy tests when harvesting reagents, and you may use reagents of any tradition

Adept: 2 free levels of Natural Immunity

DISADVANTAGES

A Rat magician must make a Charisma + Willpower (3) Test to not immediately flee or seek cover whenever caught in a combat situation. If there is nowhere to flee, she is forced to fight.

Similar Archetypes: Survival, Scavenging

RAVEN

Raven is a harbinger of trouble in cultures worldwide. He is a trickster and a transformer, dark and devious. Raven thrives off the bounty of carnage and chaos, but does not cause them—he merely knows an opportunity when he sees one. Raven loves to eat and rarely refuses an offer of food.

Raven is cousin to Coyote, who shares trickster inclinations with Raven but lacks his darkness and propensity for carnage.

ADVANTAGES

All: +2 dice for Con tests

Magician: +2 dice for spells, preparations, and spell rituals in the Manipulation category.

Adept: Free Traceless Walk and 1 level of Voice Control

DISADVANTAGES

You must make a Charisma + Willpower (3) Test to avoid exploiting someone else's misfortune to your own advantage or to pull a clever trick or prank even if it's to the disadvantage of your friends.

Similar Archetypes: Deception, Mischief

SEA

Sea is the birthplace of all living creatures. She is unfathomable and moody, tranquil and comforting one moment, fearsome and destructive the next. Though she possesses great wealth, she jealously guards what comes into her hands. Sea can be a powerful ally, but she must be courted with great care.

ADVANTAGES

All: +2 dice for Swimming Tests.

Magician: +2 for summoning spirits of water

Adept: 1 free level of Improved Ability on an athletic skill (select when receiving this bonus).

DISADVANTAGES

You must make a Charisma + Willpower (3) Test to give away something you own or be charitable in some way.

Similar Archetypes: Chaos, Greed

SEDUCER

The Seducer is the incarnation of desire. He has many whims and vices that he must frequently satisfy. He encourages jealousy and greed, and seeks to inflame the wants of others. He avoids direct confrontation but gains pleasure when others fight for his attention or on his behalf. He exists to exploit weaknesses and will not hesitate to sacrifice those who get in his way.

ADVANTAGES

All: +2 dice for Con Tests.

Magician: +2 dice for spells, preparations, and spell rituals of the Illusion category.

Adept: 1 free level of Improved Ability for a skill in the Acting or Influence skill group.

DISADVANTAGES

You must succeed in a Charisma + Willpower (3) Test to avoid pursuing a vice or indulgence (drugs, BTLs, sex, and so on) when it is made available.

Similar Archetypes: Seductress, Temptation

SHARK

Shark is a cold and relentless hunter. His power is known to all who live near the sea. When Shark strikes, he does so without mercy, driven into a frenzy by the blood of his prey. Shark magicians tend to be wanderers, always on the move. They are fierce and deadly warriors. A Shark magician believes the only good enemy is a dead enemy. If challenged, he does not waste time with threats or boasts but strikes to kill.

ADVANTAGES

All: +2 dice to Unarmed Combat tests

Magician: +2 dice for spells, preparations, and spell rituals of the Combat category.

Adept: Free Killing Hands

DISADVANTAGES

You might go berserk when you take Physical damage in combat. Every time it happens, make a Simple Charisma + Willpower Test (wound modifiers apply). You go berserk for 3 turns minus 1 turn per hit, so 3 or more hits averts the berserk rage entirely. If you're already going berserk, increase the duration. When you're berserk, you go after your attacker(s) without regard for your own safety. If you run out of targets before the time's up, you keep attacking their bodies.

Similar Archetypes: Hunger, Violence

SNAKE

Snake is wise and knows many secrets. She is a good counselor, but always exacts a price for her advice. Snake characters fight only to protect themselves and others. They are obsessed with learning secrets and take great risks in order to do so. They trade their knowledge to others for whatever they can get in exchange.

ADVANTAGES

All: +2 to Arcana tests

Magician: +2 dice for spells, preparations, and spell rituals of the Detection category.

Adept: 2 free levels of Kinesics

DISADVANTAGES

You must succeed in a Charisma + Willpower (3) Test to avoid pursuing secrets or knowledge that few people know about when you receive hints of its existence.

Similar Archetypes: Knowledge, Curiosity

THUNDERBIRD

Thunderbird is a majestic creature who is storm incarnate. Her wings are dark clouds, her beak and claws lightning, and her cries the clap of thunder. She is a primal force, often savage but necessary to the survival of the land and the continuation of the cycle of life. Thunderbird is a force to be respected and approached with great care, lest her anger be roused.

ADVANTAGES

All: +2 dice for Intimidation Tests

Magician: +2 dice for summoning spirits of air

Adept: 1 free level of Critical Strike (skill)

DISADVANTAGES

A Thunderbird magician must succeed in a Charisma + Willpower (3) Test to avoid responding to an insult in kind.

Similar Archetypes: Anger, War

WISE WARRIOR

The Wise Warrior is skilled in the art of war, for battle is an art to her, an exercise in the powers of the mind as well as the body. She studies the tactics of her foes and overcomes them through a combination of superior strategy and battle prowess. The Wise Warrior does not act out of savagery or battle-lust, but from a position of knowledge and wisdom. Wise Warriors must follow the warrior's code of honor and conduct themselves properly or risk the loss of favor.

ADVANTAGES

All: +2 to dice to Leadership or Instruction skill tests (choose one)

Magician: +2 dice for spells, preparations, and spell rituals in the Combat category.

Adept: 1 free level of Improved Ability on a Combat skill.

DISADVANTAGES

If you act dishonorably or without courtesy, whether by choice or by accident, you take a -1 dice pool modifier to all actions until you atone for your behavior.

Similar Archetypes: Duty, Wisdom

WOLF

Wolf is recognized as a hunter and warrior worldwide. He is devoted to the other members of his pack. As the ancient saying goes, Wolf wins every fight but one—the one that kills him. Wolf magicians are loyal to friends and family unto death. They do not show cowardice in battle, and their word is their bond.

ADVANTAGES

All: +2 dice to Tracking tests

Magician: +2 dice for spells, preparations, and rituals in the Combat category.

Adept: 2 free levels of Attribute Boost (Agility).

DISADVANTAGES

You must succeed in a Charisma + Willpower (3) Test to retreat from a fight.

Similar Archetypes: Hunting, Fellowship

INITIATION

As Awakened characters grow in power, they find that their initial explorations into magic and the astral plane can only take them so far in understanding and increasing their abilities. Rare books such as the *Picatrix*, *Book of Raziel*, and *Sword of Moses* talk about paths to higher magics, but in order to take a step down one of those paths, one must undergo initiation into the mysteries of magic and the metaplanes in hopes of increasing the connection with the Awakened world.

Initiation allows you to wield greater magical abilities known as metamagics and raise your Magic attribute beyond the natural maximum of 6. Only characters with a

Magic attribute can initiate. Initiation is a serious process that requires a great deal of mental and spiritual preparation, rituals, and study appropriate to your tradition. A mage might spend months in research on a particular point of magic, writing a scholarly thesis in order to prepare. A shaman might undergo a vision quest and seek guidance from her mentor spirit. The time it takes to complete initiation is determined by an Arcana + Intuition [Astral] (initiate grade, 1 month) Extended Test.

Initiation is measured in grades, beginning with Grade 1 and increasing from there. At the end of a character's first initiation, she is a Grade 1 initiate. When she completes her second initiation, she is a Grade 2 initiate, and so on. The numerical system is for tracking initiation levels in game terms: each tradition refers to grades of initiation with its own system (generally not with numbers).

The cost to initiate is 10 + (Grade x 3) Karma. After you've finished your preparations, spend the appropriate Karma and you've got yourself a shiny new initiative grade and all of its benefits.

Your initiate grade can never exceed your Magic attribute. If your Magic is reduced below your initiate grade, you lose an initiate grade right along with it.

INITIATE POWERS

Becoming an initiate gives you access to a number of benefits and abilities.

INCREASED MAGIC

The natural maximum for your Magic attribute is 6 + your grade of initiation. You've still got to pay normal Karma costs to increase your Magic attribute.

METAPLANAR ACCESS

Upon your first initiation, you learn how to travel to any of the metaplanes (**The Metaplanes**, p. 317), if you can use astral projection.

METAMAGIC

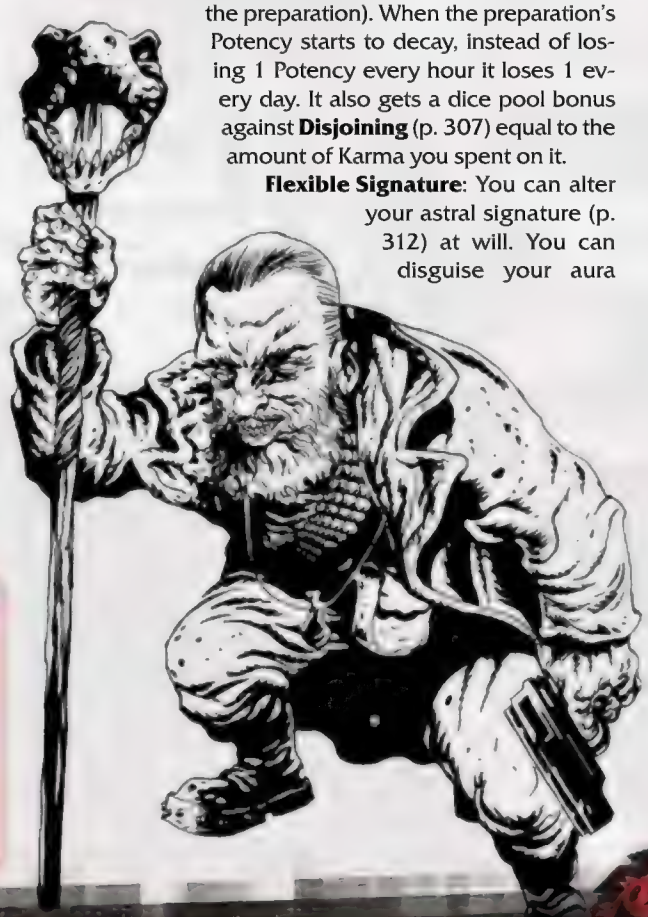
Every time you gain an initiative grade (including the first), you learn a metamagic. Unless otherwise noted, you can't learn a metamagic more than once. Some metamagics are for adepts only, and some are pretty useless to adepts.

Adept Centering (Adepts Only): Adept Centering allows you to reduce negative dice pool modifiers to Physical and Combat skills (such as modifiers from adverse conditions) by performing some mundane action at the same time. This action is something you use to focus on what you're doing (you center yourself), for example chanting, singing, shouting—it can be just about anything as long as it's not subtle. Reduce negative dice pool modifiers by your initiate grade as long as you can perform your chosen method of centering, which is a Free Action you take during your Action Phase.

Centering: A magician who learns to center has an easier time resisting Drain. By using a mundane activity appropriate to your tradition to quiet your mind and block out distractions, you add a number of dice equal to your grade to all your Drain Resistance Tests. Centering is a Free Action. The actual activity for your technique is something you choose for yourself (appropriate to your tradition, of course), and could be something like chanting in Latin, playing a musical instrument, dancing, singing, making arcane gestures, screaming the names of ancient gods—just about anything that isn't subtle. If you're prevented from performing your centering technique of choice, you can't use it.

Fixation: You magically infuse an alchemical preparation with Karma, extending its shelf life. When you create the preparation, spend at least 1 Karma (up to the Force of the preparation). When the preparation's Potency starts to decay, instead of losing 1 Potency every hour it loses 1 every day. It also gets a dice pool bonus against **Disjoining** (p. 307) equal to the amount of Karma you spent on it.

Flexible Signature: You can alter your astral signature (p. 312) at will. You can disguise your aura



METAMAGICS FOR ADEPTS

There aren't a lot of metamagics in this book that are useful for adepts. In fact, there are four: Adept Centering, Flexible Signature, Masking, and Power Point. But don't fret, chummer, we've got you covered. Not only can you take Power Points until your ears bleed with initiate grades, but we'll have plenty more metamagics for you in future supplements.

so that it can't be used to identify you, or forge the astral signature of another magician you've assensed, or simply reduce the amount of time your astral signature lasts. When someone attempts to assense your faked signature, add your initiate grade to the Assensing Test threshold—if a Grade 2 initiate leaves a forged astral signature, another magician could read the signature with 3 hits as usual, but at 5 hits would realize the signature is fake and spot the true signature underneath. You can only forge astral signatures you've read through assensing (your gamemaster may ask for a Memory Test). You can also reduce the longevity of the astral signatures you leave behind by your grade in hours—so that Grade 2 initiate can choose to leave no signature at all on effects that are Force 2 or less, and the signature of a Force 5 effect would last only 3 hours.

Masking: You learn to change the appearance of your aura (and astral form). You can make it look mundane, or make your Magic Rating look higher or lower by up to your grade. When someone tries to read your masked aura, the Assensing Test becomes opposed by your Magic + initiate grade—if they get any net hits, they see both your mask and your real aura. If you can use astral perception, you can even make your aura look like a different type (like a spirit or a focus—great for astral costume parties). You can also use this metamagic to mask the auras of as many of your bonded foci as your initiate grade.

Power Point (Adepts Only): If you're an adept, you gain a Power Point instead of a metamagic. You can take this as many times as you like.

Quickening: You can manipulate your sustained spells into a sort of loop, so that they sustain themselves instead of relying on you to do it for them. To quicken a spell, take a Complex Action and spend karma while you're sustaining the spell. You must spend at least 1 Karma but may spend up to the Force of the spell. The spell becomes permanent and gets a dice pool bonus against dispelling (p. 295) equal to the amount of Karma you spent on it.

Spell Shaping: You can reshape your area spells at the cost of making casting them harder. For every -1 dice pool penalty you take to your Spellcasting Test, you may either increase an area spell's radius by 1 meter, decrease it by 1 meter, or create a 1-meter-radius spherical "bubble" within the area of your spell that remains unaffected by it. You must declare the use of this metamagic when you cast the area spell. You may not take more dice worth of penalty than your Magic Rating.

Shielding: A character with the shielding metamagic learns to better protect herself and others against hostile spells as they are cast. When the magician declares spell defense, they can add additional dice to the spell defense pool equal to his initiate grade. These additional dice cannot be used for any other use of Counterspelling, including dispelling.

MAGICAL GOODS

FOCI	AVAILABLITY	COST
Enchanting Focus	(Force x 3)R	Force x 5,000¥
Metamagic Focus	(Force x 3)R	Force x 9,000¥
Power Focus	(Force x 4)R	Force x 18,000¥
Qi Focus	(Force x 3)R	Force x 3,000¥
Spell Focus	(Force x 3)R	Force x 4,000¥
Spirit Focus	(Force x 3)R	Force x 4,000¥
Weapon Focus	(Force x 4)R	Force x 7,000¥
FORMULAE	**AVAILABLITY**	**COST**
Focus Formula	as Focus	Focus Cost x 0.25
Spell Formula		
Combat	8R	2,000¥
Detection	4R	500¥
Health	4R	500¥
Illusion	8R	1,000¥
Manipulation	8R	1,500¥
MAGICAL SUPPLIES	**AVAILABLITY**	**COST**
Magical Lodge Materials	Force x 2	Force x 500¥
Reagents, per dram	—	250

GAMEMASTER ADVICE

ROLE OF THE GAMEMASTER

The ultimate goal of any session of *Shadowrun* is for all of the participants, gamemaster as well as players, to have fun. The gamemaster's role in this is to be a facilitator for that fun—the guy who helps make that fun happen. Primarily, the gamemaster is responsible for bringing the initial story seed, or spark, on which the session will be built. The gamemaster's unique and important role in the game group gives them more responsibility, but they shouldn't act as a ruler or tyrant of the game. In many ways, the gamemaster is like the director of a movie or the author of a story, and the players are the main characters. There are times when the gamemaster will challenge and be in opposition to the players, and there are times when the gamemaster will aid and direct the players, but the gamemaster is still part of the overall game group. The gamemaster and the players participate equally, in their different roles, in creating the fun for everyone. Think of the game as being like a boat, with the gamemaster controlling the rudder and the players rowing the oars. The gamemaster sets the direction, the players drive the game forward, and everyone is in the boat together. If they work together, things go great. If not, you either go nowhere or get lost.

This chapter provides tools and advice that will help the gamemaster make the game fun for everyone—even themselves. We'll start with the things gamemasters should be thinking about before a game session starts.

PRE-GAME CONSIDERATIONS

Your preparation is important to making a game work. Like any runner, you need to pack out. Here's some of the gear you'll need.

KNOW YOUR PLAYERS

A gamemaster should talk with the players to determine the kind of game they want to play. This is especially important if it's a new group or people that the gamemaster does not know personally. The gamemaster should get a good understanding of what the players want out of the game and how they want it played. Do they want a heavily tactical game with maps, miniatures, and lots of shooting? Do they prefer a heavily story-driven game with plot twists and exciting reveals? Do they want a game with deep and subtle characters, where issues of motivations and morality are explored? Do they want a game filled with larger-than-life situations and action such as high-speed chases, dragons, and explosions? More than likely, each of the players will want different things or will find different aspects of the game the most fun or the most exciting. The gamemaster should keep all of this in mind, or better yet write it down as a reminder when running the game.

Getting this kind of information isn't always easy. Many players won't be able to tell you exactly what they want out of a game, or they will say something that they *think* they like. To help you find out what kind of game the players will find most enjoyable, ask specific questions or for specific examples of situations they'd find interesting. Instead of asking what they find fun about *Shadowrun*, you can ask them to describe their favorite moment from a game of *Shadowrun*, or from any other game they've played. Ask for a time when the gamemaster surprised them, or when the gamemaster made them laugh. Ask them to describe their favorite NPC, or a villain they loved to hate. Get the players to start talking about their best *Shadowrun* memories—and start taking notes. You shouldn't just repeat their favorite moments and elements, but by listening to what the players share, you can get an idea of the kind of game that the players will find the most enjoyable. If all of the stories involved action-packed fight scenes, or tense moments of stealth and intrigue, then make notes to incorporate those elements into future runs.

This will help the game get off to the best possible start and avoid disasters that kill momentum in the early going. If the gamemaster were to spend a bunch of time planning a run full of deep corporate intrigue, secret plots, and subtle machinations, but the players wanted something with a high-speed chase and a gunfight, the game could fail quickly. Without going through the process of identifying what the players want, the gamemaster may

be puzzled why they seem to be bored with the story. And the players—well, they may be bored.

That said, knowing what the players want should not bar the gamemaster from planning a run that has a different theme or different elements. It may be that the players have never had the opportunity to try a different style of game, and they may enjoy it more than they guessed. Players should be accommodating enough to play sessions that have a different feel to them, and getting players (and their characters) out of their comfort zones can provide some of the best growth and roleplaying opportunities. But these diversions should most likely be exceptions. If the game consistently deviates from what the players have stated to be their preference, that can lead to frustration.

KNOW YOURSELF

Once you've talked to your players, spend some quality time talking to yourself. You need to understand what you want out of the game. Why do you enjoy gamemastering? What is it about the activity that excites and engages you the most? What motivates you to tell these stories? What kind of stories do you want to tell? Is there a particular plot that's been rolling around in your head that you want to use? A good gamemaster should know what they want to get out of running the game and how that can be achieved.

They should communicate these things to the players. If there is some kind of conflict between what the gamemaster wants and what the players want, then the conflict needs to be addressed and resolved, preferably by finding some sort of middle ground or compromise. If it cannot be resolved, then it was probably best that the game never got started.

When the players are getting what they want out of a game, they are involved and engaged. In the same way, when a gamemaster is getting what they want by telling stories that interest them, they will be engaged and motivated to put the necessary time and effort into the game. The passion of the gamemaster is infectious and can be a key element in a good game session. Conversely, an unfulfilled gamemaster will often become demotivated and less enthusiastic, which inevitably leads to the decline, or death, of the game.

GROUP RULES AND BOUNDARIES

You should now know what kind of game you want to run—you've got the broad lines, now it's time to start throwing in some details and color.

A good place to start is to discuss whether there are any **issues of personal offense**—themes or subjects that any of the players would be uncomfortable roleplaying or encountering in the game. The Sixth World is not a pleasant place, and many things can come up in the game that could make a player uncomfortable. Potential problem areas include:

- **Morality:** Is everyone comfortable with characters having varying levels of questionable morals, where there is no discernible good or bad?
- **Racism:** Even if it just involves the fictional races of *Shadowrun*, racism may hit too close to home for some people.
- **Violence:** Violence tends to happen in *Shadowrun* games. How graphic should the violence in your game be? Are there targets, such as children, that should be off-limits?
- **Sexuality:** Sexuality can be extremely sensitive for some people, and some may not want to deal with the seedier side of town in their games, or with specific sexual subjects.

Gamemasters should ask players if any of these topics (or any others) should be considered off-limits for the game to avoid any personally uncomfortable situations.

Next, **table rules** should be established, if the group doesn't have them already. These generally include etiquette and courtesy procedures while playing the game. How are rules questions handled: Look it up and get it right, or have the gamemaster make a quick ruling and move on and look it up after? How do you handle player interruptions: Can the game keep going or should it pause and wait for the player to come back? How much out-of-character discussion is allowed at the table—is the group there to roll dice and have fun, or does the group want a more focused roleplaying experience? Are there any procedures for die rolling? Must all rolls be

visible, including the gamemaster's in everyone's view? What if a die is "cocked" or lands off the table? Establishing some procedures during a combat situation such as when initiative is rolled and reported, when modifiers are calculated, and when actions are declared and resolved can significantly speed up the time it takes to resolve combats and reduce time between player actions.

The group should then discuss if there are any **house rules** they would like to implement. These are specific instances where the group decides to play the game differently than how it is written. These should be established prior to the first game being played to avoid confusion.

As a gamemaster, you should be up-front with the players about how you intend to play the **opposition** in the game. Will enemies be ruthless and press every advantage that they have until the players are dead, or will the gamemaster let the players escape damaged but alive? Will opposition be "gamed" where it is designed appropriate to the characters' skill level or will it be based solely on the gamemaster's (or group's) view of what is appropriate (or realistic) for the game world? Also, does the gamemaster make their die rolls discreetly behind their screen, or roll on the table in front of all the players? Will die rolls be fudged if they completely break the story or will everything be taken straight up?

Finally, **character death** should be discussed. Although *Shadowrun, Fifth Edition* provides many opportunities for a character to prevent their own demise, sometimes things just do not work out. Some groups prefer to stick to the rules, roll the dice, and let whatever happens happen, even to the point of characters dying. Other players may not want all the hard work they put into creating their character and writing a deep and creative background go to waste on a few bad die rolls. The group should decide if permanent character death is acceptable, even if that death is random and not fulfilling for the story. Or can character death only happen when the possibility is specifically foreknown to the player and the death dramatically appropriate for the situation?

Although discussing these topics may seem tedious, obvious, or a waste of time, going through the process will produce valuable results, even for groups that are well established. Establishing these key issues of game theme, structure, and boundaries can reduce conflict and avoid some of the pitfalls that sometimes come up in the course of roleplaying.

GROUP TEMPLATE

Creating a group of characters should be done as collaborative effort. All the players should discuss with each other the kind of characters they want to play and, by extension, the structure of the group. When characters are created, or at least character concepts created, with the input of the rest of the group, there are no session-one surprises. Players will know if their chosen role or skill set overlaps with other group members. In addition to reviewing skill sets, the group should discuss the kind of characters they want to play from a personality and morality standpoint. Is the group full of hard-line professionals, taking runs purely to support a living? Is the group a bunch of "hooders" taking runs to knock the corporations or other Powers That Be down a peg and helping out the little guy? This will set an overall tone or feel for the group.

Next, and probably most importantly, the group should discuss the connections their characters have to one another. Do any of the characters have a shared history? Are any related? Does the group have a purely professional relationship, being assembled by a fixer they all know? Or is this a group of strangers that have just come together, forced to work together through circumstance? Is there mistrust, or possibly hostility, between any characters in the group? Building conflict between characters into the group provides interesting roleplaying opportunities, but it should be handled cautiously. If the group devolves into fighting each other, the game will quickly come to a halt. If characters end up with some tension between them, be sure there is a force that pulls them to work together that is stronger than that conflict, otherwise it will become difficult to find reasons for the characters to stay together for any length of time.

Mapping out these character connections as part of character creation and prior to the first session will prevent major game-stopping problems or conflicts from occurring. If the players have done the work of planning the connections between their characters, they will find it easier to roleplay them right from the start. If there are conflicts between characters in the group, they will be known prior to the first session and thus will not come as an unpleasant shock to any player when the group begins the first session.

[**Shout out:** This idea came courtesy of *Fear the Boot*. Thanks guys!]

FINAL THOUGHTS

With all of the above work done, the game should be set up in the best possible way for success. It is by no means a guarantee, but the chances of having a successful and well-functioning game will be increased. Beyond all of the above, there is one final critical ingredient: **attitude**.

When everyone comes to the table, they should come with the attitude of dedicating themselves to the game, committed to making it work. All of the discussions described above are designed to help the gamemasters and players understand group goals and expectations and (ideally) find acceptable compromises. The discussions are intended to let everyone voice their opinion and avoid any situation where a player comes into a game with a negative attitude from the start because it's not the tone, style, structure, or character con-

cept they wanted to play. If everyone's opinion were adequately heard, considered, and brought into a consensus, then everyone should be able to commit themselves to making the game work. That's what makes a successful game.

DESIGNING A RUN

The talk is over, the goals are set, now it's time to dive into the particulars. The gamemaster now has to do one of the biggest parts of their job: Create a run. The run forms the story that will define, at least initially, the play session. How a gamemaster goes about getting an idea for a run and how it is planned can vary widely. There are as many different methods as there are gamemasters. This section is not intended to be the only or even the best method for planning a run. Instead, it provides a starting point for gamemasters who haven't developed a personal style and offers a selection of ideas and techniques that more veteran gamemasters can adapt, in part or whole, to their style.

THE HOOK

Most of the time, a run doesn't spring forth fully formed from the mind of a gamemaster. Nearly all runs start with a single idea or image—the **hook**. The hook is the initial seed that the rest of the run is built around. It may be an interesting plot concept, a run structure that is unusual and compelling. It can be an interesting piece of technology or information that becomes the focus. It can be a compelling NPC that is the driver of events. It can be a vivid action scene full of danger and excitement. Whatever its form, the hook is the thing that drives a gamemaster to think "I want to stage a run about *this*."

The hook can come from anywhere. *Shadowrun* sourcebooks, *Missions*, and adventures are full of ideas that can be used in a myriad of campaigns. Some gamemasters will read something on the Internet or in a newspaper that sounds like the plot of a shadowrun. A gamemaster can hear about an interesting new piece of technology being researched and make a Sixth World version of it the subject of a run. They may read about an interesting character, or see one in a TV show or movie and adapt the character to be in their game. There may be something in the background or history of one of the characters that forms the starting point of the run. An unresolved or "dangling" plot from a previous run may deserve to be dealt with in a future run. Or the idea could come unbidden into their head or from a source unknown. Regardless of where it comes from, it becomes the starting point.

Quite often, the hook will be a scene or image that is the climax or ending point of the run. This is okay! The hook is often the most memorable moment of the story, and it's natural for this to happen near the end. Don't worry about not having a complete story detailed. Concentrate on making the hook a compelling image and a memorable moment.

BACKGROUND

As the plot of the run starts to become more fully formed in the mind of the gamemaster, they should take time to write the background for the adventure, the text that says what's really going on. This includes many facts that the players may never find out but are significant to the integrity and consistency of the story. In *Shadowrun,* many events happen that affect the player characters but are outside their control. The Sixth World is full of powerful people all hatching their own plots and machinations. Runners usually function as operatives and agents of these powers, working on the periphery of their plans. This means that they don't have the whole picture of what is going on and why they are being asked to do the things that they do. No one in the Sixth World, however, hires runners without a reason, no matter how petty that reason may be. To that end, the gamemaster should write the background of events and motivations that has led to the runners being hired.

Who is *really* hiring the runners? What do they want them to do? Why do they want it, what are they going to get out of it? Why are they hiring illegal deniable assets instead of using some other method? What will they do if things go wrong? Who or what is the target of the run? Does the target know that they will be (or could be) the target of a run? How will they respond when (if) the run becomes apparent to them?

Initially it may not appear that the answers to these questions will be directly relevant to the run, but answering the questions will help solidify the details of the plot in the gamemaster's mind. The process of writing the background may prompt the gamemaster to make changes in how they have written some of the plot to make it more cohesive. The greatest benefit to writing the background, though, comes when the gamemaster needs to improvise away from the plot they have written while maintaining the integrity of the story. If something completely unexpected happens, the gamemaster has the information they need to take the unexpected and continue the story in a way that seems believable to the players. If done well, the players won't even know that the run has gone away from the gamemaster's original notes.

For example, imagine the gamemaster designed a run where the runners were supposed to intercept a courier and take the package being carried. The rest of the plot was supposed to deal with how the runners evade the original recipients of the package to deliver it to their employer. In the game session, though, the dice of the players go horribly wrong and they end up unable to stop the courier and take the package. The gamemaster doesn't want to override what has happened by having the players succeed despite their misfortune.

Fortunately, the gamemaster wrote in the background who was supposed to receive the package and what they were planning on doing with it, which is ship it out of the port to their offshore arcology. Acting quickly, the gamemaster finds a way for the players to acquire this information. The run then shifts to an effort to intercept the ship that's now carrying the package, bound for the corporate arcology. This improvisation could easily end up becoming the remaining plot of the adventure. The players may not ever know that it wasn't the original plot, and the events that didn't happen can be saved and adapted to fit into a future run.

SCENES

The run-planning technique presented in this section uses the core idea of breaking the run down into a series of **scenes**. A scene is defined as a discrete portion of the run that contributes somehow to the story as a whole. A scene can be a specific location where some interactions happen, it can be a period in the timeline of the story, or it can be a particular event. Each scene should have at least one aspect to it that contributes to the overall story of the run.

The first thing that should be written about a scene is the critical element it contributes to the overall story. If nothing else, a gamemaster's notes should record the purpose of the scene to ensure that it doesn't get forgotten among everything else that is going on. A gamemaster should ask themselves: if nothing else, what needs to happen in this scene? Do they need to meet an important NPC? Get a crucial piece of information? Acquire a new piece of technology? Catch sight that they are being followed? Conduct a tense negotiation? Note this critical element in some way so that it stands out.

After the critical element has been defined, then fill out the scene. Where does the scene take place? What other character are there? Does anything interesting happen to the players during the scene? Are there any potential dangers or complications? Is there anything else going on that is interesting but not central to the scene? If this is a combat encounter, what NPC stats are needed? What are the tactics of the opposition? How will they react when they start losing or winning? Or do they have a specific objective, such as preventing the players from getting an item or piece of information? Jot down enough information to give yourself a solid idea of what's going on in the scene so that you can narrate it with consistency and vibrancy for the players, and you can respond as the players interact with the scene without a lot of pauses or flipping through books.

At the same time, a scene needs to be *modular* or *adaptable*. Almost without fail, the players in a roleplaying game will do something completely unanticipated by the gamemaster. One of the key strengths of a roleplaying game is the power the players have to interact with the game freely and take any action that comes to mind, and gamemasters should encourage players to make their own choices. However, this freedom of choice can (and often will) lead to players taking an action that dramatically changes where the gamemaster had originally envisioned the plot going. An astute gamemaster can have the best of both worlds: Allowing the players to make their choice, while still having the story go in roughly the same way as they had planned. This is where modular and adaptable scenes come in. As stated before, every scene should state clearly what needs to happen in order for that scene to contribute to the overall story. With this firmly in mind, a gamemaster can adapt everything else in the scene, moving it to a different location, a different point in time, or whatever, and still have the scene move the story forward. Adapting to unexpected player choice is discussed more in **Game Management** (p. 348), but preparing for it in advance when writing scenes will make it that much easier.

SCENE TYPES

What needs to happen in a scene can be incredibly varied and depends a lot on the story the gamemaster is trying to tell. However, there are certain types of scenes that will (re)occur often in a *Shadowrun* game. Until a gamemaster gains enough experience to feel very comfortable with their planning, the following templates can serve as a useful guide for writing common types of scenes.

SOCIAL

This is a scene where the players have a social encounter with one or more NPCs who are movers, shakers, or otherwise important to what's about to go down. Most commonly, this scene will begin a run with the players as shadowrunners meeting Mr. Johnson. These scenes are generally characterized by extended social roleplaying and in-character discussion, with little to no dice rolls. This kind of scene should include the people the players are talking to, shooting, or otherwise interacting with. Detailed notes on the scene should include descriptions of the people, how they behave and react, and possibly some scripted dialog to be read in-character. The gamemaster should note enough about the people that they would be comfortable roleplaying them consistently for an extended period of time.

INVESTIGATION

Sometimes players need to get some info, and this is where it happens. This can be done through social interaction, generally with contacts, though these interactions are more brief than a full social scene. Investigation also includes scouting or searching locations through various means. This could include simply walking in, if the location is open to the public, or could involve illegal entry by one or more of the players. The

location could simply be watched on a stakeout with the players physically nearby, surveyed electronically by drones or in the Matrix, or magically. Investigation can also include gathering information by searching or hacking the Matrix—whatever the situation requires.

An investigation scene exists to give important information to the players. In your notes, you should make a list of all the pieces of information that you think the players could (or should) acquire through the investigation. As with scenes in general, keep the method of acquisition loosely (if at all) defined so as to respond to player actions. If possible, the information should be noted in such a way that it can be given to the players realistically through a variety of different means. For example, the gamemaster may note that the players can acquire the blueprints of a building. This could be obtained by physically scouting the building, downloaded from public records, hacked and taken from the building's security system, mapped by astral scouting, acquired by smooth talking (or bribing) contacts, or beaten out of a captured employee. However the players chose to go about it, they got the information they needed.

ACTION

The purpose of an action scene should be obvious. Action in a run serves to create tension and excitement and increase the pace of events. There should be some element of danger, risk, or loss to the players. An action scene can take many different forms. It can be a savage fight where bullets and spells are flying back and forth, it can be a chase where the players are tying to escape or are trying to pursue someone, or it can be a moment of dramatic tension when the players' plan reaches its critical point, or the plans of others come against them.

Action scenes are mostly resolved using die rolls and game mechanics. The most common way these scenes go wrong is getting bogged down in rules, slowing the pace of the game. In order to avoid this, the gamemaster should put in their notes all the relevant game mechanics needed in the scene, or at least references to the page(s) where the rules can be found.

BUILD BACKWARD

As described above, a single scene is written around contributing one or more points to the overall plot of the run. Building the overall plot of the adventure is done by stringing together multiple scenes that make up the whole. As described above, planning the plot of an adventure starts with a *hook*. The hook is the initial idea or vision that the gamemaster starts with. While not always the case, the hook is quite often the climax of the adventure. This should form the starting point when planning the scenes of the overall run. It may seem counter-intuitive to start at the end of the plot, but this method will ensure that the overall plot builds toward the hook as the climax. So, first the gamemaster should write out a scene that centers around the hook (often the climax) of the run, whatever that may be. The gamemaster shouldn't worry so much about *how* to get the plot there just yet, focusing instead on making the climactic scene as dynamic and exciting as possible. This should be the most memorable moment of the run, so it should be written to make an emotional impact on the players.

Once the scene that forms the climax of the run has been written, the gamemaster should begin writing additional scenes working backwards from that scene. What led the players to get into the situation that forms the climax? How did they get to the climactic location? How did their opposition get there? What are the goals of the players, and of the opposition? By answering some of these questions and focusing on what happened to get the players to the climactic scene, the details of the scene that preceded it will begin to form. Once that scene has been planned, the gamemaster can repeat the same questions to plan the scene that came before that, and so on until the scenes work themselves backwards to the beginning. Once the process is complete the gamemaster should have a series of scenes that set the frame of the overall plot of the run from the beginning (often meeting a Mr. Johnson) to the end (often completing the run and getting paid).

As mentioned before, there are probably as many different ways to plan a run as there are gamemasters for *Shadowrun*, so a gamemaster should feel free to adapt this methodology to whatever suits them best. For example, a gamemaster may find that they want to focus on the "big picture" plot of the run first before planning the details of the individual scenes. In this case they may find it more helpful to make only a few quick notes about each scene, noting just the most important aspects of it as it contributes to the overall plot. This will form a brief "skeleton outline" of the plot of the run from beginning to end. From there the gamemaster can move into writing more specific details for each scene.

TRANSITIONS

While writing these scenes, the gamemaster should be mindful of keeping them as loose and modular as possible. In addition to the contents and context of each scene, the gamemaster should write out a general idea (or several ideas) for the *transitions* between scenes. The transition defines how and when the players are going to move from one scene to another. What will be the trigger to move from one scene to the next? When is the meeting complete? When the players have acquired the needed information or equipment? When they've defeated their opposition? When some third party arrives and changes their plans? Just as the details of the scene should be kept fairly nonspecific so they can quickly be adapted to player choice, the transitions between scenes should be kept similarly

vague so that they too can be changed and adapted to player choice.

In order to keep the game plot natural and allow the players to feel in control, the gamemaster should avoid forcing any specific scene transition or sequence on the players. Let the players make their choices and have their decisions drive the plot. This may mean there is no immediately natural way to get from the current scene to the next that the gamemaster had planned, so the gamemaster may have to improvise some sort of brief (or lengthy) transition scene to move the plot from one point to another. This could also result in the gamemaster dramatically adapting the subsequent scene to fit with the choices the players have made. The purpose behind this is to ensure that the players are having fun by having their choices make a meaningful difference, and the gamemaster has fun by telling the story they want, even if it has to be adapted.

WRITE THE BACKGROUND

Just as is the case with a good character, a good plot needs a backstory. The gamemaster needs to write a background that gives the story context in the overall game world. If the gamemaster reaches a point where they're stuck and can't figure out how to get to a particular scene or plot point, the background can help jumpstart the creative process and give them new ideas about how to integrate the players' decisions back into the larger plot of the run.

OPPOSITION

Next to creating a plot or story for the players to follow, the most significant task in writing a run is designing the opposition. Goals and accomplishments never seem worthwhile unless they are achieved through resistance, and struggle is a central theme throughout *Shadowrun*. The gamemaster should have a clear idea of the relative level of difficulty they want to have in the run. How challenging will it be for the players to achieve their objectives? How much time and resources should the players have to expend in the course of accomplishing (or even attempting) their goals? Should the run challenge them significantly in a specific area: physically in combat, financially with a drain on their nuyen, socially by forcing them to make alliances, or intellectually by requiring them to outthink their opponents? The nature of the opposition is directly tied to the story of the run and should make sense based on the situation presented to the players. There are several specific things to keep in mind from a game perspective when designing opposition.

BE APPROPRIATE

Most of the time, the opposition of a run should be at a level appropriate to the skill and power of the players. While sometimes it may be entertaining and fit the story to have only low-level opposition, players may quickly become bored with always walking through the bad guys with no sense of danger. Conversely, opposition that clearly outmatches the players in power and skill can be very dramatic if used occasionally, but will quickly become frustrating if the players feel that they are not equipped to meet any challenge. Thus, most of the time, the opposition of the run should be relatively the same, or *slightly* above, the skill and power level of the players (or slightly below if they significantly outnumber the players). This means that NPCs should have skills and equipment roughly equivalent to what the players have, as long as it fits the story. Matrix systems should have a rating about equal to the deck that is going to crack it, or an opposing magician should have about the same Magic attribute and selection of spells that the player magician has. Combative opponents can be as wired as the player street sam, or there could be more of them to balance out the odds. The end result is that the players should feel challenged but not overwhelmed.

In addition to the level of opposition, keep in mind the kinds of challenges that the players are equipped (or not) to handle. If there is no magician in the group, any sort of magical opposition will be very difficult. If the group has no decker, needing to manipulate a lot of electronic security will be nearly impossible. Will the group have to do something through brute force when they are more geared for stealth? Or will they be forced to eschew violence when they are normally armed to the teeth? For the most part, keep challenges within the skill areas the group is equipped to handle.

GIVE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

A player group in *Shadowrun* is generally made up of a number of players that have a specialized skill set: street samurai, face, magician, decker. When writing the opposition and general challenges of a run, the gamemaster should be mindful of the skill specialties of the players. There should be a challenge of some sort written in the run that is best solved by that skill specialty. If there is a street samurai geared for combat, then there should be a point where the group gets into a fight. If there is a face, then social interactions and having the right contacts should be an important factor. If there is a magician, then there should be a problem that can only really be solved through magic. If there is a decker, then give them a system to subvert. In this way none of the players should feel like their character didn't contribute anything to the group, or didn't have an opportunity to show their skills.

HAVE STATS FOR EASY ACCESS

While in the planning stage of a run, the gamemaster should take the time to put any and all relevant game

stats and rules that they think they will need into their run notes. NPCs that are important to the story should have stats in the run notes, especially if they are involved in a combat. If there is a system that the decker will need to intrude on, it should be defined and mapped out. If there are some other aspects to the story that touch upon particular areas of the rules, like enchanting or breaking through barriers, then the rules should be copied or summarized in the run notes. At the very least, a reference to the appropriate rulebook page should be noted. With rules notes or references in place, the gamemaster doesn't need to take time to stop telling the story and go look up a rule that is needed. The rule should be right at hand, easily referenced and used, so the story can continue as seamlessly as possible.

PLOT HOLE CHECK

Got everything planned out? Great. Now give it the once-over to make sure it makes sense. When planning a run in reverse, plot flow and transitions seem natural in the context of where the plot is going, and this is known because the scene to follow was written *before* the scene that precedes it. However, when moving *forward* through the plot, the transition to the next scene or plot point may not seem natural, or even logical, given what has happened before or the information available at the time. For example, a scene may center around the players meeting a key NPC or visiting a key location, but the gamemaster may forget to actually let the players know about the NPC or location prior to the scene taking place; there's no logical reason for the players to go to a person or place that they don't know about.

To avoid these kinds of plot holes, the gamemaster should read through the notes of their run from beginning to end—reversing the order in which it was written. While reading, they should be looking to ensure that the plot makes sense when moving forward through it, and that the flow and transition from scene to scene make sense given what has happened before. Additional notes can help the plot make more sense and the transitions more logical or obvious, possibly by giving the players additional hints or foreshadowing key locations or NPCs by mentioning them earlier in the plot. While going through this process, the gamemaster should also think about alternate choices the players may take that could change the direction of the plot and make notes on how the plot could be adapted to accommodate those choices.

GAME EXTRAS

At this point, the plot should be fairly complete and ready to run. However, if the gamemaster wants to put in some extra effort there are a few things that can be done to make their game even more memorable and focus the roleplaying of the players.

DOCUMENT HAND-OUTS

Document hand-outs can serve as a great focal point for the players. These are most easily done as some form of document written from an in-game context that provides some meaning or information to the players. This can include: a news story about some recent event(s) pertaining to the run, an advertisement for a product or company that factors into the plot, a stolen corporate file, an intercepted Matrix message, a series of posts made on JackPoint, or a diary of the last desperate thoughts of the victim of some tragedy. The document can be given to the players whenever appropriate—at the beginning, in the middle (when acquired by the characters), or at the end to serve as some sort of epilogue. In any case, the document will serve as a way to focus the players on the plot and make the overall game world seem more real to them.

MAPS

Maps of key locations can be very useful. If the focus or climax of the run is a location, such as the players having to break into a corporate office, a map of that location is almost mandatory. By having a map, the details of the location can be much more easily kept consistent by the gamemaster, avoiding confusion and frustration by the players. A map need not have all the details, indeed the gamemaster may need to keep some things from the players, but it should show the general layout and any obvious features of the target location. If a gamemaster is particularly ambitious or skilled, they can create the map wholly on their own, but this is not the only option. Published *Shadowrun* adventures often have multiple location maps in them that can be taken whole or adapted to the run that the gamemaster is planning, and *Sprawl Sites* map packs have locations that can be dropped into any city. Alternatively, maps of many different kinds of places can be acquired with an Internet search—blueprints or drawings of houses, offices, and factories can be freely acquired. Additionally, many cities and locations in *Shadowrun* are based on real-world cities and locations, so maps and photographs of the actual place can be used as a starting point.

PROPS

Bringing props to a game is another way to add a new dimension to the gaming table. Real-world objects can be brought in to represent in-game objects such as credsticks, data chips, or even weapons (it's not a good idea to bring real weapons, though). The addition of a physical object that the players can actually hold and examine can serve as a focal point for the roleplaying. The gamemaster can even attach an in-game meaning to the prop, such as the player holding the prop (out of game) is the same as the character holding the item (in game).

MUSIC

Music can be a very powerful tool for setting emotion in a scene. The music doesn't need to be an obvious or overt part of the game to be effective. A little bit of background music while the game is going can set the general emotional tone of the scene. By choosing an appropriate piece of music, the gamemaster can add tension, levity, sorrow, solemnity, or almost any other emotion to their game. If the gamemaster wants to use music, they can note the tracks they want to play and when they want to play them in the run notes. Music can also be more overt, though this should be used only in certain circumstances so as not to detract from the overall game. However, if a scene is taking place where music in an integral part, such as a club or concert, then the gamemaster can put on something they feel closely matches what would be playing at that location. By telling the story through another channel or method, the players will likely be more engaged and more focused on the roleplay.

RUN TEMPLATES

While the specific details of a run will always vary from one to another, at a broad level many runs follow one of a few patterns. The following are templates of common *Shadowrun* plots. A gamemaster can follow the template idea more closely to make a classic run, or can use it simply as a starting point and adapt the details to fit their own ideas.

DATASTEAL

In a Datasteal the runners are hired to acquire some information of value to their employer. The information may be purely in electronic form, requiring access to the Matrix system where the information is stored. Information can also be in the form of an item, some prototype technology that represents cutting edge research. In a Datasteal, the primary objective is to get the data and deliver it back to the employer. Most of the challenges in the run involve circumventing any security that surrounds the information to protect it. Security around the data may be strong and obvious, such as being in a highly protected corporate office with plenty of guards and loads of electronic security. Data can be protected through secrecy, with the data being hidden and the greatest difficulty coming in uncovering its location. The data target can also can also be moving from one place to another, forcing the runners to capture it while it is in motion.

ASSASSINATION OR DESTRUCTION

Assassination runs involve killing one or more people, while destruction runs involve irreparably damaging some property or object. Presenting an assassination objective can provide an interesting moral decision for some groups, where one or more runners refuse to take "wetwork." Obviously, the main difficulty in an assassination run is planning how to kill the target. The employer may specify that the target must be eliminated within a specific timeframe or in a specific way. A target person may be someone of importance who has their own personal security to provide a formidable obstacle. The target may be inaccessible, difficult to get close to without some special permission. They could also be famous, constantly surrounded by media and fans, making killing them without being identified quite difficult. Further complications can come if the target is not killed outright in the initial attempt, forcing the runners to have to deal with groups that may be coming to the target's aid, such as law enforcement, personal security, or emergency medical services. To finish the job, the runners may have to make another attempt in very different circumstances, such as a hospital, where the target is now under even tighter protection because of the initial attempt on their life. Alternatively, the focal point of the story can be how the runners escape retaliation after eliminating the target.

A destruction run shares a lot of the same properties as assassination, with the difference being that the target is an object instead of a person. Obviously the central aspect of the run is the nature of the object that needs to be destroyed. This will determine what the runners will need to accomplish the task and how they will go about it. Just as with an assassination, the object may (and probably will) be protected with some level of security, or could be difficult to access, or difficult to destroy in its own right. If the runners are not successful, or if they are too slow in their initial attempt, they may need to deal with some sort of security response.

EXTRACTION OR INSERTION

An extraction run is all about taking a person from a place or organization, while an insertion involves placing a person inside a place or organization. When extracting a person, the employer may want the target to work for them, or they may want to deny that person's usefulness to others, or they might have any one of a number of motives. Discovering the reason why can be an interesting side objective. The first major difficulty in an extraction comes in circumventing the security that may surround the target. The security can be obvious and powerful, secretive, or mobile (or possibly a combination thereof). An extraction differs in the difficulty of the target being a person rather than an object. Capturing and transporting a person presents a lot more difficulties than a non-living object, or even a living thing that isn't a person. An extraction can be willing, where the target wants to go with the runners but their current employer doesn't want them

to leave. Conversely, more complication (and fun) can come when the target is unwilling and the runners will have to coerce or force the target to come with them. While transporting the target, they may be looking for and taking every opportunity to escape from the runners and go back to their original employer or alert the authorities. Transportation presents the second major difficulty in an extraction. The target and the delivery point do not have to be in the same city (that would be too easy). Transporting the target from their original location a significant distance to the delivery point can present a very interesting (and entertaining) challenge for the runners.

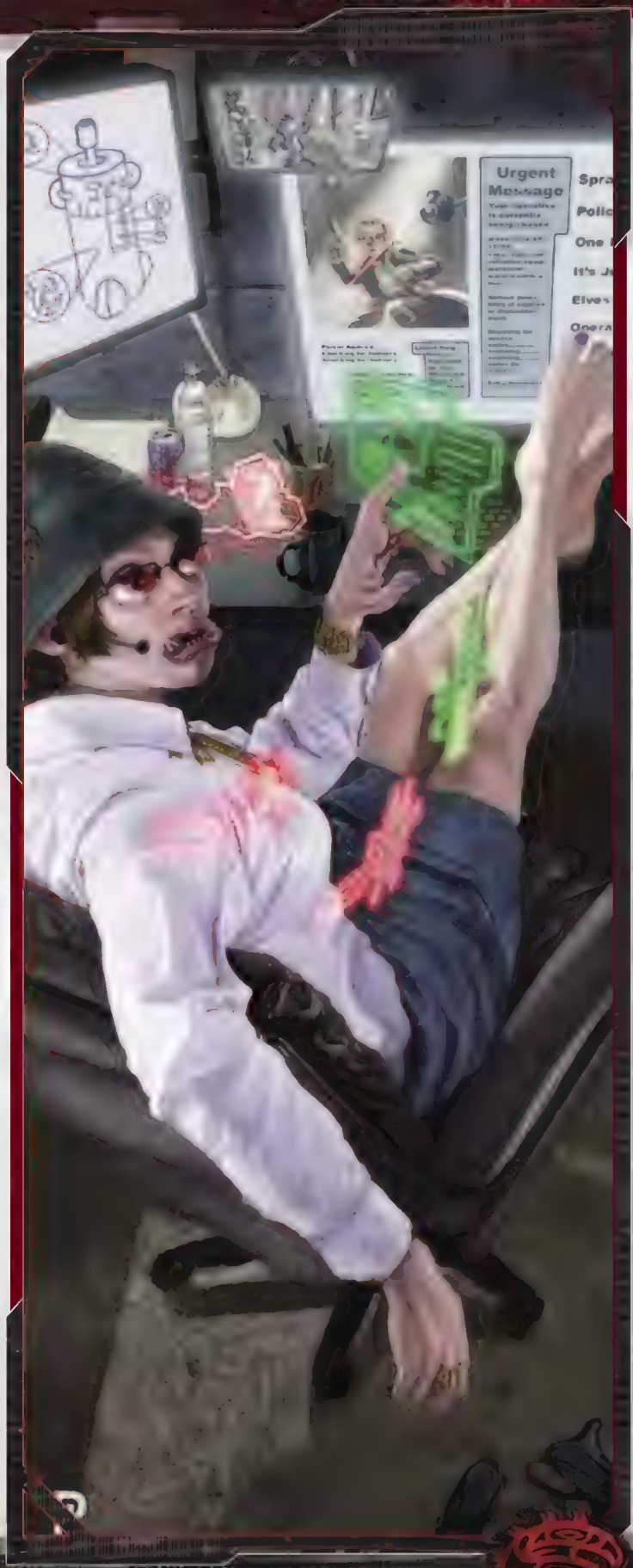
An insertion run is the mirror image of an extraction. The runners are attempting to plant a person, generally some kind of spy, into a location or organization. The insertion could also involve planting an object. Many of the parameters and difficulties are the same between an extraction and insertion. Security around the target must be subverted. Stealth becomes a much bigger priority in an insertion, as the target needs to be unaware that a spy has been placed or the operation will be ruined.

MISDIRECTION

Sometimes the runners are not working on their own but are part of a larger whole. For particularly difficult or complicated tasks, an employer may hire runners to serve as a distraction or to perform some misdirection so that the main objective can be accomplished by a different group. A misdirection run can involve a wide variety of objectives. The runners can be sent to acquire (or attempt to acquire) a piece of data (like in a Datasteal) or a person (like in an Extraction). They may need to *plant* a piece of evidence, or create the illusion that something is happening when it is not. Sometimes all the employer needs the runners to do is make a big show of force to draw out and distract the security forces in a location. An employer should define for the runners what needs to be accomplished in order for their misdirection to be a success. For further complications, the runners may not know that they are part of a misdirection. They may believe theirs is the real target, only to learn later (possibly to their chagrin) that their objective was a fake.

PROTECTION

Just as an employer may hire runners to attack a target in order to steal or destroy it, an employer may hire runners to protect someone or something they suspect will be a target. The subject of the protection can be a variety of things. It can be a location that the runners have to protect from intrusion and damage. It can be an object or set of data that can be in a fixed place or mobile. It can be a person that is suspected to be the target of extraction or assassination. What is being protected provides the first set of challenges for the run. A team



will need to prepare differently if they are protecting a location, an object, or a person. There may be parameters or constraints on what they are allowed to do to protect the target. Can the target be moved? Is the target fragile or sensitive in some particular way? Does it require any special considerations, such as being kept frozen or not subject to high heat? Must the protection that the runners provide be hidden or overt? The second major challenge or aspect of a protection run is the nature of the opposition. Do the runners know who will be coming after their target? Do they know when they will be coming? What kind of opposition can they expect to see? Obviously, giving the runners as little information as possible presents the greatest challenge, but the gamemaster can give varying degrees of information (or misinformation) to make the run more interesting. Having the opposition be a significant surprise in some way will provide an extra memorable challenge. There can also be additional complications, such as the target actually *wanting* to be taken, and the runners having to force the target to stay.

DELIVERY

Simple set-up here—a delivery run is where you take the thing to the place. The three major aspects of a delivery run are: what is being transported, where it is now, and where it needs to go. If the item being transported presents challenges, and the terrain or route that needs to be traveled also presents challenges, that can be enough without having any other kind of opposition.

First, the item(s) being delivered needs to be defined. Is it just one thing, or several? Large or small? Alive or inanimate? Does it require any special circumstances or considerations, such as temperature, a defined time period, or fragility? Preparing to accommodate these requirements can be a significant portion of the run itself, especially if the equipment needed to fulfill them is unusual or specialized. What if the item were an Awakened creature with magical powers, so the runners not only needed to able to transport a live creature but inhibit its magical powers as well? What if the item were radioactive? Do the runners know anything about it at all? The specifics of the item being transported can have a major impact on a delivery run.

Next, the gamemaster should decide where the item needs to be delivered, what kind of terrain needs to be traversed, and how long the team has to get there. Transporting something from one side of a city to another presents a very different challenge than taking something over a mountain range, desert, or ocean. A gamemaster can have the team use their own transportation (or find their own) in order to make the delivery, or have transportation be provided as part of the run. A delivery run provides a great opportunity for the gamemaster to introduce new or exotic locations, or just get the players out of a location that has become overly familiar to them.

If the task or terrain isn't creating enough of a challenge on its own, the gamemaster can plan some additional opposition. This is often in the form of some third party that wants to take (or destroy) the cargo that the team is delivering. Again, this provides an opportunity to introduce a kind of opponent, method of attack, or setting of combat that is unfamiliar to the runners and provide some variety.

RANDOM RUN TABLES

Maybe you want to plan a run but don't know where to start, maybe you're in the middle of a session and need to come up with a side job or new mission, or maybe your friends have just shown up unexpectedly and are demanding that you run a game tonight. Whatever the reason, the following tables can be used as a resource when preparing for a run. They can be used to generate a complete run of random elements, though the result might not make a lot of sense. They can also be used to introduce a few random elements into an existing plot.

JOB TYPE

What kind of job will the runners be doing? Roll 1D6 and consult the table.

JOB TYPE TABLE

1D6 RESULT	JOB TYPE
1	Datasteal
2	Assassination or Destruction
3	Extraction or Insertion
4	Misdirection
5	Protection
6	Delivery

MEET LOCATIONS

Where does the initial meeting with the employer take place? Roll 1D6 and consult the table.

MEET LOCATION TABLE

1D6 RESULT	LOCATION TYPE
1	Bar, Club, or Restaurant
2	Warehouse, Loading Dock, Factory, or Other Underused Site
3	Barrens District or Other Urban Hellhole
4	Moving Vehicle
5	Matrix Host
6	Astral Space

MACGUFFINS

This is the central element of interest to the story; the target of the run. Roll 1D6 and consult the table.

MACGUFFINS TABLE

1D6 RESULT	MACGUFFIN
1	A key employee
2	A prototype product
3	Cutting-edge tech research
4	Bioengineered life form
5	Magical object
6	Urban building, rural location or infrastructure object

EMPLOYERS

Who is employing the runners to accomplish their goals? Roll 2D6, add them together, and consult the table.

EMPLOYER TABLE

2D6 RESULT	LOCATION TYPE
2	Secrety Society *(Black Lodge, Human Nation)*
3	Political or Activist Group *(Humanis Policlub, Mothers of Metahumans)*
4	Government Official or Agency
5–6	Minor Corporation *(A-level or smaller)*
7–8	Megacorporation *(AA-level or larger)*
9	Criminal Syndicate *(Yakuza, Mafia)*
10	Magical Group *(Illuminates of the New Dawn)*
11	Private Individual
12	Exotic or Mysterious Being *(free spirit, dragon, AI)*

TWISTS

In *Shadowrun* things never go exactly according to plan, or are exactly as they seem. At some point in the run, something unexpected will happen. Inject some chaos into your run. Roll 1D6 and consult the table.

TWISTS TABLE

1D6 RESULT	TWIST
1	Security is unexpectedly high
2	A third party is also interested
3	The target is not what it appears to be (group was lied to)
4	The job requires a rare piece of equipment
5	Target has been moved or is being moved
6	The employer decides to double-cross the runners

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

Non-player characters (NPCs) are an essential tool in the gamemaster's toolbox. NPCs bring life and personality to a setting, making it more interactive and entertaining for the players. Whether NPCs appear only once or recur through multiple sessions, a gamemaster should endeavor to make them memorable.

DESCRIPTION

An obvious place to start when creating an NPC is defining their essential features: race, sex, and appearance. When planning, a gamemaster can simply list the vital aspects of the NPC or write a short narrative description that can be read to the players when the character is first introduced. For very basic or short-lived NPCs, this simple description is probably enough. If the character is to play a significant role in the run, or if the character is to recur, the gamemaster should put more detail into the character's description.

What makes this character memorable, or unique, physically? Do they dress a certain way? Have distinctive tattoos, piercings, or other markings? Do they have cyberware or other visible augmentations? For significant characters a gamemaster should create about one to three physically distinctive qualities. These will serve to make the character memorable, fixing them in the minds of the players. If done well, the gamemaster could bring the NPC back after a long absence and recall him to the players' memories through a quick description of a telling detail (e.g., "It's Anatoli, the fat guy with the gaudy rings on all his fingers").

Below is a list of some sample distinctive traits that can be randomly rolled. This is by no means an exhaustive list, nor is the gamemaster required to keep whatever they rolled, but it can serve to prompt creativity.

PHYSICAL TRAITS TABLE

1D6 RESULT	TRAIT
1	Tattoos, piercing, or jewelry
2	Unique dress style
3	Unique hair style
4	Obvious or distinctive cybernetics
5	Dramatically high or low weight and/or height for metatype
6	Abnormally clean or dirty

PERSONALITY

After defining an NPC physically, a gamemaster should define their personality. How do they act? How do they talk? What do they like and what do they hate? What are they afraid of? For simple or short-lived characters, this can be as simple as a single sentence. When defining the personality of a basic NPC, the quickest way to make them memorable is to choose a stereotyped personality. Since the characters will not be interacting with the NPC a great deal, there is no downside to making them fairly one-dimensional. Thus the personality definition can be something as simple as "loud, babbling, and twitchy" or "sullen and brooding, always talking in a low voice" or "brilliant but flighty and absent-minded."

For more important NPCs, there should be a short paragraph defining their personality, which can go into more detail about their particular quirks and traits. Personalities of significant NPCs should avoid simple stereotypes and be more subtle and multi-faceted. The initial seed or idea for the character's personality could originate from a stereotype, but the gamemaster should begin to alter and expand upon it from there until it is more fully developed and believable as a person. It's not a bad thing, though, to create some sort of trademark aspect of the character's personality to help the players remember the character. Maybe they have a particular quirk, style of speech, or mannerism that makes them especially memorable. While this quirk will help remind the players of the character, it shouldn't define the whole or even the majority of the NPC's personality.

PERSONALITY TRAITS TABLE

1D6 RESULT	TRAIT
1	Hair-trigger temper
2	Very easily distracted
3	Racist
4	Chuckles constantly
5	Regularly high or drunk
6	Flirtatious with anyone/everyone

Below is a list of some example personality traits that can be randomly rolled for an NPC. As with the physical traits, this is by no means an exhaustive list of choices but is presented in order to prompt creativity.

BACKGROUND

While writing the personality of the character, it can be valuable to develop a background for the character. This background includes a brief history of the character's life, the major events that shaped their character to this point, along with a more detailed description of their current situation. What is the character doing right now? Do they work for someone, or are they on their own? Do they have friends, associates, family, lovers, or enemies? A lot of this information may never be directly used in any game session, but it can be very useful to the gamemaster when roleplaying the character to understand why the character behaves the way they do. It is entirely possible that the background content will provide seeds for future runs or be used as part of improvised plots should the need arise.

MOTIVATIONS

While the physical description and personality of the NPC define the character for any situation they might be in, their motivations define how they will interact with the gamemaster's story. Defining the motivations of an NPC goes beyond simply casting them as "ally" or "enemy" to the player characters. The Sixth World is full of people and power groups that have an array of conflicting, overlapping, or completely incompatible goals. Whether someone is friend or foe is a matter of perspective and situation, with the potential for the same person to drift between them as time goes on. By defining a full set of goals and motivations for a character, the gamemaster will be able to portray the NPC in a much more believable and realistic manner. Furthermore, when the players take actions that the gamemaster did not expect them to take (as they inevitably do), having a full set, or even a strong idea, of motivations for an NPC will give the gamemaster the resources to continue the story and maintain the integrity of the character.

For example, say a gamemaster had designed a ruthless corporate executive with plans to push forward a project that destroys a natural habitat while advancing his own career and expanding his power. This character was written to be a persistent villain for the players, with a strong personal ambition and ruthless morals. The gamemaster expected the players to oppose the project and thus come into opposition with this corporate executive. However, in an unexpected twist, the

player characters ended up not being at all sympathetic with the people affected by the corporate expansion. In fact, the players saw there was good money to be made in working for and with the executive behind this project. Since the gamemaster was planning on the executive being in opposition to the players, there were no notes on how the character would work with the players. Since the gamemaster wrote a detailed set of motivations for the executive character, though, his future plans are known and the gamemaster can use that to build the (now suddenly different) story. Defining a character's motivations is done by answering two questions. First, what does this character want? Second, why do they want it?

What the character wants is often something relating to the plot of a run or perhaps the focus of an entire campaign. There should always be *at least* one character or group whose goal is to be the centerpiece of the story. This will readily bring the character into conflict with any other parties (such as the players) in the plot that may also be after the goal in question. Simply creating characters that all have the same goal is not a bad way to go, especially for a start. If plots repeatedly focus only on certain characters who share the same goals, however, it can make them repetitive and predictable. Where a gamemaster can start providing more interesting choices and plot opportunities is in adding characters with motivations that are related or ancillary to the focal point of the plot, but not necessarily part of the main conflict. These characters could sometimes be in conflict with the main parties, sometimes assist them, or just be bystanders. All of this provides interesting and varied story opportunities, opens up increased player choice, and makes the story a more rich and varied experience. For example, the main plot of a run or series of runs could be the players attempting to stop a corporation from buying out and destroying the low-cost housing in an area the players want to protect. Obviously the goal of the corporate manager in charge of this project is to acquire the properties and push forward the development, while the players are trying to stop this. To put a third related party into the story, there may be a powerful criminal syndicate that is operating in the area. Their goal is to continue to make money running their criminal operations, but how will they be affected by the corporate development? Maybe the players can convince them that the corporation's changes would be bad for their operations, or maybe the corporate manager decides to strike a deal where he turns a blind eye to their operations, or even helps to conceal them from the authorities, in exchange for their cooperation. The local head of the criminal syndicate could come into the story in many different ways. Yet another character to add to the plot could be a local politician, looking for re-election in the area. Do they take campaign contributions from the corp in exchange for helping with the development? Can they be convinced to oppose it to

EXAMPLE

Tom, the gamemaster, is writing a plot about a place of magical power deep in the wilderness of what was formerly Canada, now part of the Native American Nations. The spot is an ancestral holy site for the tribal elders and shamans, with annual festivals of great significance being held there. The local tribe is well respected by their neighbors, and the site is a source of great pride for them. The tribe makes a small amount of money carefully harvesting handmade telesma and foci from the site, trading with smugglers who operate frequently in the area. The cultural identity of the tribe has become so enmeshed with the magic site that most members would be willing to die to keep it safe. Recently, two other parties have become interested in the site.

Argel Numian, a powerful member of the Atlantean Foundation, learned of the site while researching ancient texts of lost magic. Argel's research indicated that the site has such potent magic because an artifact of significant power is hidden there, unknown to the natives. He wants access to the site so he can conduct a careful excavation of the area, discover the artifact, and claim it for the AF. Argel is well aware that the excavation of the area and removal of the object will ruin the site for the natives. He is willing to exert considerable pressure on the natives to gain control of the site, through illicit and generally indirect means. Argel prefers to work covertly, but is willing to do much of the dirty work himself. He has significant resources to draw from the AF, including a small number of highly trained agents, and a variety of exotic equipment including magic items and critters. He also knows that the Atlantean Foundation has a public image to maintain, and although the area is fairly remote, public exposure and proof of his, and thus the AF's, activities in the area would be extremely damaging. He values his position in and future with the Foundation more than acquiring the artifact. There will be others to acquire, if this one proves too difficult.

Gorou Hakari is a ruthless executive for Insight Resources, a company owned by MCT that harvests magical reagents. MCT sources have recently learned of the native power site and assigned Gorou to set up a harvesting operation there. Gorou is a veteran of MCT's exploitation in Tsimshian and has no respect for Native Americans or their antiquated traditions. He has been tasked with making a profitable operation, and that is what he intends to do. MCT has given him resources and a budget for the project and expects him to succeed. Gorou is a hard and blunt man who intends to use the same brute force and strong-arm tactics that were successful in Tsimshian. This includes government pressure, blackmail, intimidation, and staging attacks on his own equipment in order to retaliate with force. Once the natives have been removed, he plans to set up an operation to harvest the maximum amount of raw magical material from the site, for the lowest cost, for as long as it is still profitable to do so. He knows that this will inevitably end in the ruining of the inherent magic in the site and doesn't care. He is under pressure from his superiors to produce results. Although Gorou is willing to take whatever measures are necessary, the project does have the goal of making a profit. If the operation encounters enough delays and incurs enough cost that it will no longer be profitable, it will be canceled.

gain support from the local residents? If the gamemaster wants to add yet another story element, part of the politician's campaign platform could be a crackdown on the criminal syndicate operating in the area. This puts the syndicate in conflict with the politician, but can the players use this to gain the support of the syndicate or the politician (or both!) in their goal of stopping the corporation? Additionally, there can easily be more characters involved than just the leaders of these organizations. Each of them could easily have multiple aides, assistants, cronies, and underlings, each of whom could have their own motivations that could be slightly (or completely!) different than those of their boss. Just like that, by defining the motivations of some major characters, a rich and multifaceted story is created.

Why the character wants something is just as important, if not more, as defining what they want. Multiple characters can have the same goal but have very different reasons for wanting it, and this can set completely different directions for those characters. In defining why, gamemasters will generate information that can be drawn upon for future plots or when improvising because the players have taken a completely new direction. A character's actions will be much more consistent if a gamemaster has defined why they pursue particular goals. As events in the plot transpire and the story moves forward, the actions of the NPC will have a method to them. This doesn't mean that the "why" motivation must be obvious, but it does need to be consistent. Often, defining why an NPC wants to achieve a goal involves describing what they will do if they achieve it. However, a gamemaster should also define what they will do if they are stopped from achieving their goal, what measures they will take and resources they are willing to use to achieve it, and at what point they will give up on their goal and move on. These aspects will prove valuable as a resource for developing future plots involving the character and that goal. Finally, defining the why of the character's motivation could also provide an opportunity to re-introduce the character in a later story, where they may have a new goal they are trying to achieve, but for (generally) the same reasons as the previous one.

STATS

After all the "fluff" (description, personality, and motivations) of an NPC has been written, it's time to give the character game stats. This includes all of the relevant attributes, skills, and equipment required for the game mechanics. There are a few different methods to go about this, as listed below.

FULL BUILD

The Full Build method creates an NPC just like a player character. The gamemaster goes through the character creation process for the NPC, according to the rules. Then the gamemaster assigns them an amount of extra Karma and cash based on how experienced the NPC is and what resources they would have acquired. Karma is spent to improve skills and attributes with all of the same costs listed for player characters, while cash is spent to acquire new equipment (though ignoring any rolls to acquire the equipment, unless the gamemaster really wants to roll). While this is a very time-consuming process it will produce the most balanced character stats in relation to the players, as the gamemaster has control over all of the details of the NPC. Because of the time involved, this should generally be reserved for just the most important NPCs, and ones that are likely to make repeat appearances in the game.

STORY BUILD

In a Story Build, the gamemaster simply assigns Attributes, Skills, and equipment that are appropriate for the NPC to have given the story. Rules still need to be followed governing absolute maximums and such (the character should not have stats higher than it is ever possible to get in the game), but all other rules can be ignored. A gamemaster simply looks at the character they have written and assigns what is appropriate. If this is an elite corporate black-ops agent, then they should be highly trained and well equipped. If the character is a successful corporate raider and manager, then they should be highly skilled and wealthy but probably lacking a lot of weapons and combat abilities. This method still creates the full game stats for a character, but is much faster than the Full Build method and will probably be the one most commonly used. It does carry the risk of creating NPCs that are highly imbalanced in relation to the players, but if that is what is appropriate for the story then that's what is valid.

IMPROVISED BUILD

When doing an Improvised Build, the gamemaster creates an NPC on the fly during an adventure that they had not planned for, or didn't think that they would need stats for. If preparation time is particularly short, the gamemaster could prepare an NPC as an Improvised Build. In this method, the gamemaster simply decides how powerful or skilled the NPC is *in relation to the players* and assigns some positive or negative number. A negative number would mean the NPC is less powerful, while a positive number would mean they are more powerful. The gamemaster should also have a rough, broad idea on the categorical abilities of the NPC. Are they physical combat oriented, magically gifted, technically skilled, or socially savvy? Then the gamemaster looks at the most similarly skilled player, and assumes that the NPC has whatever skills and abilities that player has with ratings equal to the player's plus or minus the value they assigned the NPC. To add some variety, the gamemaster should give the NPC some different skills,

powers, or equipment than the player has, so as not to make some sort of "evil clone," but for the most part the NPC can be equivalent. If the players aren't looking at the gamemaster's notes to see they don't have any stats written down, they'll probably never know.

EXAMPLE

Tom needs to run an unexpected combat against a corporate security team. He decides that the team doesn't have any magical backup, and is made up of gun-toting goons slightly less skilled than the players, giving a value of –1. Tom looks at the group's Street Sam and notes an Automatics skill of 5 and an Agility of 5. So, when rolling for the guards, Tom rolls 9 dice (10 –1).

ROLEPLAYING THE NPC

Once the NPC has had a full description and game stats, the character is ready to contribute their part to the story. The NPC can have a fabulous physical description, deep and intricate personality, interesting background, complex motivations, and perfectly crafted stats, but if the gamemaster plays the NPC poorly, it will be ruined. To make an NPC successful when played in a game, there are several factors that should be kept in mind.

KNOW THEIR PURPOSE

The first thing that should be firmly fixed in the mind of the gamemaster is the NPC's purpose in the story. What is this character supposed to do, what are they supposed to contribute, and how do they affect or help build the story? Are they supposed to help the players at a critical point? Are they supposed to frustrate and oppose them? Is the character a central aspect throughout the story or there only to provide context and color to a single scene? By staying focused on the character's place or role in the story, the gamemaster will have an idea of how to use the character as the scene plays out, and can adjust in order to stay on track. Characters that are only supposed to play a minor role should not have a great deal of time dedicated to describing and roleplaying them in a scene, while more major characters can receive the attention that is necessary to more fully develop them.

STAY FOCUSED ON PLAYERS

Above all else, the players should remain the stars of the story. The game should always revolve around them. A gamemaster can all too easily get caught up in a particularly great and interesting (they think) NPC that they created. In an eagerness to show and use this character, the story starts to become about the NPC and what they're doing rather than what the players are doing. This should be avoided. At certain points in the story, the focus can temporarily center around an NPC if, say, the players ask an NPC to accomplish something that they can't do themselves, but the focal point of the story should always return to the players. They should be the ones driving the story forward.

Also to be avoided are NPC-to-NPC only interactions, or "puppet shows." It is highly doubtful that the players will enjoy simply watching the gamemaster roleplay on their own for any extended period of time. If this situation comes up, the gamemaster should find *some* way to engage the players by having one or more NPCs ask them questions or something to bring them into the scene.

LET THEM GO

There will inevitably be a point in the story where the NPC is no longer part of it. The character may have completed what they needed to do to help the players, the players may choose to go in a different direction, or the NPC may be severely injured or killed. Whatever the circumstances, a gamemaster should always be ready and willing to let an NPC go. Almost nothing kills a game faster than a gamemaster who will not let their pet NPC go when the players can clearly see that the character no longer serves their purpose. If a gamemaster insists on continuously forcing the NPC back into the story in contrived ways, the players will quickly become resentful of the NPC and frustrated with the game. In a roleplaying, especially one as rich in characters as *Shadowrun*, the gamemaster gets the opportunity to play many different NPCs with a lot of different abilities and backgrounds. Although it may be disappointing to have an NPC that the gamemaster spent a lot of time and effort on leave the story too early, there is a limitless supply of interesting characters waiting to be created.

This concept is particularly important when it comes to characters that oppose the players, villains. If the dice rolls go their way and the player characters legitimately defeat (or kill) the character, then **let the players have their victory.** Again, nothing kills a game so quickly as a gamemaster insisting that their "Baron von Badass" did not (and cannot) lose, thus taking a legitimate victory away from the players. In a game of random die rolls, there are bound to be streaks of good luck and bad luck on both sides. Sometimes that can mean that a villain character designed to oppose the players for an extended period of time gets taken out long before the gamemaster intended. This is just part of the game that the gamemaster needs to adapt to, and there are many techniques to adjust the game and still maintain the overall aim of the original story; see **Handling Surprises** (p. 349). After all, in the end the villain was written to be defeated.

GAME MANAGEMENT

After the gamemaster has done all of their preparation and has their run notes ready, it's time for the players to come and start the game. Once the game begins, the gamemaster has a completely different set of concerns.

SHADOWRUN'S THREE WORLDS

Shadowrun is a unique game in that the play, the action, can take place in three different "worlds:" physical, Matrix, and Astral (magical). In addition to these three being completely different locations that a player can exist and interact in, they also represent a set of actions and abilities that are mutually exclusive. While this provides an incredibly rich and diverse setting and field of play for a game of *Shadowrun,* it does create some challenges for the gamemaster.

First, the gamemaster needs to be aware that each of these three worlds are mutually exclusive, and thus spending too much time focusing on one of them excludes the others and thus can exclude other players. Second, the rules that resolve actions in each of the three worlds are different, giving the gamemaster more to manage. A particularly skilled or passionate gamemaster may take it on themselves to learn all of the rules in detail, but this is not necessarily required and can be quite intimidating for gamemasters new to *Shadowrun*. At a minimum, the gamemaster should be reasonably familiar with the basic, or overall, rules that govern each of the three worlds, but from there they can rely on a more knowledgeable player for all of the specific details. As gamemasters gain more experience, they will naturally become more familiar with the specifics of all of *Shadowrun's* rule subsets. Finally, a gamemaster should be familiar with the kinds of things that can be accomplished in each of the three worlds, and what is more challenging. With this knowledge, a gamemaster can anticipate the run's challenges and level of opposition, and adjust the degree of difficulty on the fly.

SPOTLIGHT TIME

Every player will think that the character they are playing is interesting in some way. There is some aspect to that character that the player finds interesting and wants to explore in a roleplaying session: their personality, their skill set, how they interact with other characters, or something. When the player brings that character to the table, it is part of the gamemaster's job as the facilitator of the session to give the player the opportunity to do something with that character that they find interesting. A player who doesn't have the opportunity to roleplay their character and participate in the way they want will become bored, frustrated, or both. They will not be having fun.

A gamemaster needs to be constantly aware of how much *Spotlight Time* they are giving each of the players. Spotlight Time, in this case, is defined as a period of time that the gamemaster gives for a character to be the focal point of the story. Spotlight Time is measured in "real world" time rather than game time; it matters little to a player that their character spent 5 days doing something interesting if it only took 5 minutes of real world time to roleplay. Gamemasters should always strive to give an equal amount of Spotlight Time to each of the players in their game. When each player feels like they have been given an adequate opportunity for their character to do their thing, they will be much more content. Depending on the dynamics of the group, balancing Spotlight Time can be challenging. The process can be broken down into the following steps.

CHARACTER SKILLS

First, the gamemaster should have a good feeling for the skill sets of the characters in the session. Are some stealth oriented? Combat monsters with guns or swords? Is the magician geared to throw manabolts in combat, or for more subtle manipulations? A decker wired up to slice hosts but runs from a physical fight? Does the face have a long list of valuable contacts and not much else? Chances are if a player has built a character to be good at something, then they want the opportunity to do that in a game. The gamemaster should keep a mental inventory of the primary skill sets of the characters. This information should be fairly top-of-mind when they are running the session, as it will be needed to switch or adapt scenes on the fly. By knowing character skills, the gamemaster will know the kind of things to do for a character, the nature of the scene, when it is time to give them Spotlight Time.

PLAYER PERSONALITY

Second, the gamemaster should understand the personalities of the players at the table. This should focus on whether the player is extroverted or introverted. Does a player have a tendency to speak up, jump in, and take control of a situation? Or is the player quiet, reserved, and more willing to go along with others? This is important because left unchecked, the extroverted or more dominant personalty players will take over the session and their characters will dominate the Spotlight Time. Identifying the extroverts and introverts in the group shouldn't be difficult, even if the gamemaster is unfamiliar with the players. This identification is important because each type needs to be handled differently when it comes to managing Spotlight Time. Extroverted players will naturally grab Spotlight Time for their characters as they will seize opportunities to do interesting things. A gamemaster will not allow these

players to completely dominate the time, cutting their scenes short or not even letting them begin, when necessary, to let others have an opportunity. Introverted players will need to be prompted or drawn out into their Spotlight Time. Sometimes it will be enough to simply prompt the player and ask them for their action(s). Other times, it will take more leading with the gamemaster setting up the structure of a scene or prompting the player with more specific choices.

STEP IN

Ultimately, balancing Spotlight Time is about the gamemaster stepping in and changing things. It may be that a group is naturally balanced and every player has an equal opportunity to have Spotlight Time, but this is rarely the case. More often, the gamemaster will need to introduce constraints and opportunities in order to balance the Spotlight Time. This begins with the planning of the run, designing challenges and writing scenes that are matched to the characters and their skills. This is discussed in **Designing a Run** (p. 335). However, the gamemaster will often need to make adjustments as player choices quickly change the original plan(s).

If one player is taking too much time to resolve their action, the gamemaster can speed up the resolution of it, or put the scene/action on "pause" and move to another player for a while, coming back to the original later. "Cutting away" especially at a dramatically appropriate time can have other benefits as well, such as increasing pace, dramatic tension, and immersion. If a scene took much longer than expected and was dominated by certain players, the gamemaster may have to cut, move, or adjust later scenes to emphasize a different set of players. This is where writing the scenes as modular plot points really starts to pay off (see **Scenes**, p. 336). For example, if a combat took much longer than the gamemaster had anticipated and was dominated by the combat-oriented characters, it may be necessary to remove an upcoming combat scene or adjust it so that the stealth- or social-oriented character gets the focus instead. If the decker is dominating the information gathering with Matrix searches and hacks, then the next piece of information shouldn't be available on the Matrix. Perhaps it's one of the face's contacts who has the information, or the group finds out that it is only known by a hostile gang or other group and the information must be taken by force. Make some quick notes about what was adjusted in the story so it can stay consistent, and then move forward with the plot.

PACE

Controlling the pace of the run is another important responsibility of the gamemaster. Having written (or at least read and reviewed) the plot of a run, the gamemaster should be familiar with the overall storyline and where the points of greatest drama and excitement will occur. The gamemaster should be watching the amount of real time that is being spent on moving through the various plot points to gauge whether the run is moving at an adequate pace. If too much time is spent on plot points of lower significance or excitement, the run will seem to be dragging. If the players are becoming bored and less engaged, it's time to move the story along at a quicker pace: cut a scene short, resolve actions quickly, cut complications, and move on. If the gamemaster knows that a more exciting part of the story is still a ways off but the players are already becoming less engaged, it may be time to improvise a new scene to add some excitement, or rearrange the order of events. If the players don't seem interested in the current story point, or the way events are unfolding, then future scenes should be adapted in a way that they will find more engaging.

Conversely, if the players are highly engaged in some aspect of a story and are enjoying themselves, a gamemaster can cut an upcoming scene change. If something good is going on, don't mess withm it! For example, if the players are really engaged in sneaking their characters into a building, disabling sensors, and focused on avoiding fights, then the gamemaster can take the scene that they planned where a security team stumbles upon the players and remove, or delay, it. If the players are just coming off a highly exciting action scene, such as a chase, then a slower scene may need to be inserted next to give some down time before the next planned action scene.

Controlling pace is all about watching the players' engagement in the story and adjusting the timing of events to maximize it.

HANDLING SURPRISES

Just as "no battle plan survives contact with the enemy," no run survives (intact) contact with the players. It seems to be an irrefutable law of roleplaying that no matter how much planning and forethought a gamemaster does, the players will always do something that was not anticipated. In roleplaying games, this is a strength rather than a problem. Above all else, the players in a game should feel empowered and allowed to make their own decisions. However, this means the onus falls on the gamemaster to adapt and move forward with the story. This is often easier said than done.

Adapting the story of a run starts with writing it to be adaptable. As described under *Scenes,* a gamemaster should write the plot of their run with adaptation in mind, knowing that player choice will necessitate change in the story. Even if this hasn't been done, the first step is to identify the **key plot points** that make up the structure of the story. A key plot point is a point in time or an event that constitutes an integral part of the story. Without the key plot point, it wouldn't be the same story. Do the players need to meet an important NPC? Receive a critical piece of information? Obtain an object? Defeat

a foe? As each key plot point occurs, the story unfolds one step at a time. When a gamemaster has identified the key plot points of their story, they know what can be changed when improvising, and what needs to stay.

With the key plot points remaining fixed, the rest of the story elements can be adapted based on player choice. Setting can be changed from one place to another, characters exchanged or eliminated, or any other elements changed as needed. While adapting a scene, the gamemaster should have two objectives in mind. First, the story should follow player choice in a natural way, and second the gamemaster should work to tell the story they originally planned. Whatever the player characters have done, whatever choice they have made, should not be overridden by the gamemaster. If the group decides to go to a different location, that is where they go. If they decide to kill an NPC (and make all the proper rolls), the NPC should stay dead. A gamemaster should always respect and accommodate player choice. However, there should still be the opportunity for the key plot point to take place. This is where the adaptation comes in. If a gamemaster has clearly identified the key plot element, they should be able to place it in the story such that it still occurs, even though the players have changed the circumstances. If the gamemaster does it well, the players will never know that the gamemaster had to change anything from their original notes. When adapting to keep the story going forward, a gamemaster has three main strategies: relocate, replace, or remove.

RELOCATE

Probably the most common technique is to **relocate** a key plot point. This involves taking the core elements of a scene that convey the key plot point and moving them to wherever the players have chosen to go instead of where it was originally planned. This can be as simple as changing a scene from one location to another, but it can also involve relocating actions from one character to another, or events from one time period to another. Another kind of relocation involves changing the way, or method, a plot point is delivered. In general, relocating involves changing one or a small handful of elements of

EXAMPLE

Thomas, the gamemaster, originally planned that the player characters would head to their favorite club and overhear a drunk corporate researcher as he talked too loudly about his latest nova-hot research. This would catch the players' interest, and the rest of the run would have them stealing the research and attempting to sell it. However, the group's decker convinces the group to break with tradition and attend his favorite virtual club instead.

Thomas identifies that the key plot point is for the players to learn about the research *somehow*. This is what is necessary for the integrity of the story. He decides to adapt the scene by relocating where the information is given, and by whom. As the players socialize in the virtual club, Thomas has a contact of the decker approach him and offer to sell him a particularly interesting rumor about some corporation research.

an originally planned scene to reflect the differing choices that the players have made. The core element(s) of the plot remain unchanged, with just the proper names or window dressing of the scene being changed.

REPLACE

The second technique is to **replace** the scene that conveys the key plot point. Replacing is more dramatic than relocating, and it should used when no part of the originally planned scene remains. This will happen when the player decision is so completely different from what was anticipated something completely new must be created. The players may have decided to go to a different city when they were expected to stay, or stayed when they were expected to leave. Or the players may have decided to solve a problem or create a plan in a completely unanticipated way. When a scene is replaced, the gamemaster is most often improvising a new scene on the fly. The key plot point remains, but the gamemaster will need to figure out a way to work it into the new scene. Adapting this dramatically is challenging for the gamemaster, but can create some memorable gaming moments.

EXAMPLE

The players in Thomas' game have heard about the corp research project and are interested in breaking in to steal it. They proceed to the building where the research is happening to create a plan for getting in. Normally, the players in Thomas' group prefer to sneak into places using a combination of hacking and magic while avoiding gunfights, so Thomas had planned this part of the run assuming the players would act as they usually do. However, they decide to break with tradition again, and come up with a crazy plan to convince the local street gang to start a riot and storm the corp building, which will create a cover for the group to move in. This is nothing like Thomas had anticipated.

The only key plot point is that the group must obtain the research, because the rest of the run (as planned) involves the group trying to sell what they have stolen. So Thomas replaces the original scene of a stealth intrusion and improvises one where the group has to earn the trust of the local street gang by passing their initiation rituals. After gaining their trust, the players and the gang stir up a riot near the target building.

REMOVE

Sometimes the story develops in such a way that the gamemaster can **remove** an entire scene or key plot point, while still maintaining the integrity of the story. In fact, there are cases where the story makes more sense, flows more naturally, if the plot point is removed than if the gamemaster somehow forces it to happen. This is probably the least common form of adaptation, but is one that the gamemaster should still consider. Removing plot points or scenes can be done for pacing purposes as well.

EXAMPLE

Thomas' players have the corporate research data. The next major step in the run that Thomas had planned was for the players to have to find a buyer for the information. A scene was planned that involved the players going to no small amount of effort to find a buyer for the sensitive information while still being discreet enough to not be noticed by the corp that they stole it from. However, as Thomas is gearing up to run the scene the group's face lets the rest of the group know that he has a contact who is an information broker who deals in stolen information. For a cut of the profits, the broker will find a buyer for the information and all the group has to do is stay low.

Thomas had completely forgotten about the face's contact when planning the adventure. Without forcing some unnatural circumstances on the players, Thomas doesn't see any way that he can go ahead with the scene where the players need to find a buyer. So he removes the scene and skips ahead to the scene where the players have a buyer and need to set up the exchange of information for money.

RUNNING SCENES

Scenes can and will vary a great deal depending on the needs of the story being told. In general, the most common scenes can be broken down into three major categories: investigation, social, and action. A scene may have elements of one, two, or all three of these types. What follows are some specific tips for gamemasters running these kinds of scenes.

INVESTIGATION

An investigation scene is typified by the players going about a process of information gathering. Generally players will use a variety of methods to gather the information, following whatever their character specialty happens to be: physical, electronic, or magical. The player group will commonly split into sub-groups or individuals in this kind of scene, so each can pursue an avenue of investigation using their particular skills. A

rigger may use drones to survey the target, a stealthy adept may break into key areas, a decker will do Matrix searches and hacks, and a face will call their contacts and talk to people. When running this kind of scene, a gamemaster should pay particular attention to the amount of time given to resolving the actions of each of the players (see **Spotlight Time**, p. 348), and try to balance it among them. Ideally, the gamemaster's notes for this scene should simply list the key pieces of information that are available to be found, and remain open to *how* that information can be gathered. This way, the gamemaster can allow each of the players to be successful in their own way and feel that they have contributed something. If one player is taking too long to resolve their actions, a gamemaster can put their actions "on pause" to give some time to another player to resolve their actions. This technique is discussed in more detail under **Pace** (p. 349).

Another common problem with these kinds of scenes is player frustration. To the gamemaster who wrote the plot, the clues and avenues of investigation will seem obvious. However, things never seem so obvious to the players. If a player attempts an avenue of investigation that is completely wrong or off track, the (seemingly) natural reaction is for the gamemaster to say, "you find nothing," and shut it down. **This should be avoided.** If the gamemaster does not *somehow* work with the actions the players are attempting, then the game devolves into the players attempting to guess what the gamemaster was thinking when they wrote the plot. This will become frustrating **very quickly.** In many ways it will seem like the video games from 20 or more years ago where the player would attempt many actions only to have the game continually say "you can't do that" or "that doesn't work."

When running an investigation scene, the gamemaster "rule of thumb" should be: *make everything work*. That means that every action the players attempt, no matter how off track the gamemaster may perceive it to be, should have *some sort* of positive result in pointing them back to the story. If a player calls up an NPC that would never know anything about the plot, that NPC should at least say, "maybe try talking to this person" or "I don't know, but you could try asking around there." In this way the player(s) get some sort of direction from the gamemaster that allows them to move forward. In general, a gamemaster should be generous with hints and clues, using them as a trail of breadcrumbs to lead the players along in the plot.

SOCIAL

A social scene is typified by extended interactions between the player characters and non-player characters. When preparing to run this kind of scene, a gamemaster should ensure they have a strong idea of the personalities of all the non-player characters that are going to be involved, listing out the most important traits or quirks along with some memorable quotes in their notes. A social scene is primarily about roleplaying, with the least amount of die rolling occurring. This kind of scene is most successful when everyone can stay in character as much as possible. Having a unique voice, accent, or mannerism for the NPC will make it more memorable for the players.

Social scenes can benefit greatly from some game aids to help keep everyone in character. A prop can be associated with a particular NPC. Drawings of characters or locations can help give the players a solid mental image. Music will go a long way to establish the tone and setting of the social encounter. If the scene is supposed to take place in a hot nightclub like Dante's Inferno, then have some club music on in the background.

ACTION

An action scene is typified by sequences of danger and excitement. Most of the time in an action scene is taken up by resolving the dice mechanics of the actions. While action scenes in a movie or book are fast, and increase the pace of the narrative, there is a real risk that an action scene in a roleplaying game will actually slow the pace due to all of the rules and dice rolling involved. A gamemaster can take steps to reduce the risk that the game will get bogged down in an action scene.

First, a gamemaster should prepare to run the action scene. Any rules that the gamemaster knows they will need to reference should be written out, or at least a page reference noted, so they can be accessed quickly. If an action scene is going to feature a particular subset of rules, such as a vehicle chase, the gamemaster can reread that section of the rulebook to make sure the rules are fresh in their memory. Similarly, stats for the appropriate people and items involved in the scene should be written in the session notes. A gamemaster should also avoid slowing the game down by stopping to look up rules in the middle of an action sequence. A ruling should be made on the spot that will keep the game moving, and then a more detailed check into the rule can be made after the session. The rules serve to tell the story, and so the story should not be stopped by the rules.

Second, the gamemaster or the players should do action recaps. When dice are being counted, rolled, and actions resolved, players and gamemasters can lose the mental picture of what is going on in the action scene, especially if they are not the one performing the action. Action recaps are a technique that helps focus everyone in the group on how the action scene is unfolding. After the mechanics of an action have been completed and the result is known, the gamemaster or the player that performed the action should quickly narrate what just happened for the benefit of everyone else in the group.

Finally, the gamemaster and group collectively should develop their own system or structure for resolving combat actions. What this means is that the group should

develop a set of agreed-upon procedures for how they handle the common elements of combats, such as rolling initiative, tracking turn order, and declaring actions. If everyone has a solid understanding of how and when things are done, the actions will resolve quicker and less time will be lost. "Do I roll initiative yet?" "Whose turn is it?" "When is it my turn?" "What just happened?" These are the kind of questions that will be reduced or eliminated if the group has a well-established and understood combat resolution system. For example, the group's procedure for combat may be: the gamemaster to call "initiative," each player rolls, and then waits for the gamemaster to call their name before telling what they rolled. Initiative values are then written on a whiteboard or scrap paper and displayed for everyone to see clearly. The gamemaster then begins calling character names when it is their turn and each player declares their actions. With an established order of actions, combats will inevitably run more smoothly.

CAMPAIGNS

A campaign, in roleplaying terms, is a series of runs that are connected in some way, which could simply mean they involve (mostly) the same characters. However, the most common way to connect a series of runs is through a campaign plot.

CAMPAIGN PLOTS

A campaign plot is a story that evolves over a series of runs rather than a single one. In many ways, though, the story is written in the same manner using the same techniques as creating a story for a single run. Just as with planning a run, building a campaign plot should start with a hook. The hook needs to be the most compelling element of the plot, so it should be exciting and unexpected. There will inevitably be times in the campaign where there will be some difficulties with scheduling, logistics, motivation, or whatever, and it is an exciting and compelling story that will get the players to stay motivated. The hook need not be more than a single sentence that has the central story idea. Sometimes the hook will also be the climax or ending of the campaign, but sometimes not.

Next, the gamemaster should write the **ending** of the campaign. As with writing the plot of a single run, writing the ending first ensures that the final conflict is a fulfilling climax to the overall story. This doesn't mean that the gamemaster needs to predetermine exactly what is going to happen and who is going to succeed, but the conflict or event that the campaign plot builds to should be defined. Without knowing where the plot of the campaign is going, the gamemaster is in danger of creating a wandering plot that could seem to have little purpose, and thus little interest to the players.

Once the ending is set, the gamemaster can **work backward**, determining how (probably) the situation of the ending came about, and then write a plot point around that, and then determine how that occurred and so on, working back to where the campaign starts. Now the gamemaster should have a timeline of **plot points** which lay out the progression of the story of the campaign. Each of the plot points will likely have an entire run dedicated around it, so they should be significant.

PLOT PACING

An important factor for a gamemaster to consider when writing and running a campaign is pacing. Just like when crafting an individual run, the gamemaster should control how quickly or slowly plot information is revealed to the players. In a single run this happens through the use of scenes, but in a campaign it happens in whole runs. Beyond that, the principles are very much the same. If the overall story seems to drag or gets revealed too slowly, the gamemaster can speed up the pace by introducing more campaign plot points in a shorter span of time, or eliminating some intermediate ones and reveal more significant ones that were planned for later.

EXAMPLE

1. Campaign run 1
2. One shot
3. One shot
4. Campaign run 2
5. One shot
6. Campaign run 3
7. One Shot
8. Campaign run 4
9. Campaign run 5
10. Campaign run 6

Overall a gamemaster should decide what kind of pace they want to convey for the campaign. Is the story one of a shadowy conspiracy that is slowly revealed? Or is the campaign a frantic race against the clock to avoid some impending disaster? When the gamemaster decides how they want to pace the campaign, that will determine how quickly or slowly the campaign plot points should be revealed. A gamemaster should then develop a rough timeline of the campaign's runs, to get a picture of how the plot will unfold.

Unless the gamemaster intends for every run to be part of the main campaign plot, the timeline of campaign runs should be interlaced with "one-off" runs that have a self-contained plot. This is a technique commonly used in a TV series with a season-long plot. By placing or "spacing" the campaign plot runs out with runs that are not, the gamemaster controls the overall pace of the campaign plot. To achieve greater dramatic effect, the gamemaster can increase the frequency of campaign plot runs toward the end, as the campaign story reaches its conclusion. For example, say a gamemaster has an idea for a campaign plot that will be revealed over six runs. However, the overall campaign would have ten runs in it.

PLAN TO FINISH

One of the most common mistakes a gamemaster will make in a campaign is being over ambitious. A gamemaster may want to tell a grand story that spans twenty, thirty, or more adventures. While this may seem grand and exciting, what happens (all too often) is that the campaign never finishes. A simpler campaign plot that reaches its conclusion is better than a grand one that never finishes. Know the commitment level of the players, and the gamemaster should be honest about their own commitment and plan accordingly.

DATA MANAGEMENT

When planning for a campaign, a gamemaster should have a strategy for how they are going to track the data associated with it. In order to get the most impact out of a campaign, there should be a fair amount of continuity in the game world as the plot unfolds. This means that a gamemaster will need to keep track of locations and characters that they introduce, events that happen, and other such things. This data tracking can be done on paper, in a document, on a forum, in a specialized program, or any other method that works. The point is that the gamemaster needs to have a plan for how they are going to record, track, and recall the necessary aspects of running a campaign. If left to memory, there will inevitably be mistakes and inconsistencies, and this will detract from the immersion and fun of the game.

CAMPAIGN TIME AND CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT

Another factor that a gamemaster should put some thought to is the time period, in game time, of the campaign plot. This will affect the pace at which the player characters advance. How often will the group perform a run: every month, twice a month, every six weeks, or something else? A gamemaster should have in mind how often they want the players to be able to raise a minor or major skill, and purchase a minor or major piece of equipment. For example, say the gamemaster decides the players should be able to advance a minor skill or purchase a minor piece of equipment every run, and raise a major skill or purchase a major piece of equipment every three runs. This pace of advancement, combined with the average rewards per run (see **Run Rewards**, p. 375), will set the frequency that runs will occur in the campaign timeline. If the runs need to happen at a different pace for story reasons, the gamemaster can adjust the rewards that are given for each run from the base values in order to maintain the pace of advancement that they have determined.

ALTERNATE CAMPAIGNS

The default premise for a *Shadowrun* campaign is for all the characters to be shadowrunners, the freelance criminals of the Sixth World. While this premise provides a vast array of story opportunities, it is not the only way that a game of *Shadowrun* can be played. What follows are some ideas for alternate campaigns, where stories can be told from a different perspective. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list of all the possibilities of different campaigns, but simply a list of ideas to prompt creativity.

STREET SCUM

Not everyone gets the opportunity to be a fancy shadowrunner with mystic mojo, chrome augmentations, or Matrix wizardry. For some people, life is a struggle just to get food and shelter for the day, and avoid a nightly beating.

In a Street Scum campaign, the players are people trying to survive on the unforgiving streets of the Sixth World. This campaign provides some great opportunities to focus on a smaller scope of the *Shadowrun* world and get to know it in much more detail. Characters in a Street Scum campaign will likely never travel beyond the district of the city that they live in; maybe not even out of their neighborhood. Locations and characters can be developed in much greater detail, and players could find themselves getting much more attached than they would in other campaigns. Stories in this campaign would focus on how the characters and the people around them struggle to survive and make some sort of living in a world that has all but forgotten about them. Challenges can come from internal sources as gangs or other power groups wrest for control, or from outside when more powerful organizations such as corps or criminal syndicates attempt to move in and control something.

Resources and equipment in this campaign should be very scarce. Player characters will be the underprivileged and uneducated of the Sixth World. During character creation, a gamemaster should reduce the amount of Attribute Points, Skill Points, and Resources that the characters can acquire—instead of choosing each row of the priority table once on character creation, characters should either select once from row B, once from row C, once from row D and twice from row E, or twice each from rows C and D and once from row E.

HIGH LIFE

This is the life that every shadowrunner dreams of: luxury accommodations, the best gear, and nuyen flowing in like water. Somebody has to call the shots and be the movers and shakers of society, and in this case that just happens to be you.

In a High Life campaign, the runners have become very successful. They have plenty of resources and the skill to match. Their services can only be acquired for the highest prices, and yet they are still in big demand. This kind of campaign is everything in the *Shadowrun* world turned up to 11. This is the luxury life of the upper elite that most other people only hear about. There are private jets, real food, and custom-ordered companion-

ship. A campaign at this level allows the gamemaster to tell stories involving characters and events that would normally be out of the realm of possibility. The players can be meeting and interacting with the biggest names in the Sixth World: corporate CEOs, dragons, or world leaders. Runs they are being hired for can involve grand schemes in exotic locations, with huge consequences on the outcome of the run. Nothing is off the table of possibilities for what the players can be involved with.

When creating characters to play in a campaign like this, Attribute Points, Skills Points, and Resources should be increased dramatically from what is presented in default Character Creation. When using the Priotity Table, players should select twice from row A, once from row B, and twice from row C. There should be no Availability limit to the equipment the characters can acquire. This is the time to open up and play with all the toys.

MILITARY OR MERCENARY

Stealth and subtlety may be how things get done in the sprawl, but out here it's time to break out the big guns. When nothing but the raw application of force will do, we're the ones you call.

A military or mercenary campaign is all about doing a job in the the conflict hot spots of the Sixth World. The characters might be working for the military of a government, corporation, nation, or on their own as a mercenary group. Running a military campaign is great for a group that wants to go bigger and better in the action department. This is a setting where big guns, heavy armor, and high explosives are the norm. That doesn't mean that there can't be a powerful or compelling story, however. The players may be part of an offensive, striving to take fortified defenses and stay on a timetable, or they could be part of a freedom fighting group, operating behind enemy lines in a guerrilla war of hit and run. Players could also be part of a Special Forces or Black Ops team, taking on strike missions against critical enemy targets. A military campaign can be a great way to tell a story of conflict while letting the players use every weapon at their disposal.

Character creation in a military campaign will be fairly close to the standard rules presented with Attribute Points and Skill Points. Resources should be increased dramatically (tripled or more), with availability limits on military equipment ignored. Alternatively, a gamemaster could ignore the purchase of equipment and create a pool of equipment that the players have available to them to accomplish their missions.

DOCWAGON

When things are at their worst and you need someone to help, we'll be there. Like a guardian angel, we'll watch over you and be there right when you need us.

A DocWagon (or other emergency services) campaign is all about saving people's lives instead of ending them. Players work as emergency, high-threat response crews that pull injured clients out of dangerous situations. This could be a significant change in focus for many *Shadowrun* players that provides refreshing roleplaying opportunities. Player characters will need to respond to emergencies and sometimes defend themselves against the same kind of characters they were playing before. Legal and jurisdictional issues and the need to obey laws can cause complications, and DocWagon employees need to protect the company's property and bottom line. A DocWagon campaign will allow the gamemaster to tell stories in the world of *Shadowrun* from a completely new and interesting perspective.

Character creation in a DocWagon campaign can be fairly close to standard. Resources should be selected from a limited list that the gamemaster determines is available, or simply assigned to characters based on their role.

CRIMINAL SYNDICATES

In this world people are either on the top or the bottom, predator or prey. You don't care how the money gets paid, as long as you get your cut.

In a Criminal Syndicate campaign the players are working for one of the major crime syndicates in the Sixth World: the Mafia, Yakuza, Vory, Triads, Koshari, or some other. This is a campaign for players who want to explore the darker side of the Sixth World. Money is made and the organization is protected by whatever means are necessary. The criminal world is filled with violent, ruthless individuals who use and betray people for their own good. While dark in tone, a criminal campaign is no less filled with interesting story opportunities. Criminal syndicates are frequently in conflict: with law enforcement, other criminal organizations, and internal rivalries. Players will need to watch their own backs, work for the organization, and navigate the complex world of criminal politics.

Character creation in a criminal campaign should be basically unchanged. The skill selection of the players may be different given the context of the game, but the amount of points should remain the same. Gamemasters may want to restrict the availability of equipment, but for the most part career criminal syndicate members have access to the same things that professional shadowrunners do.

SECURITY IN THE SIXTH WORLD

When runners get up to their nefarious deeds, it is the security forces of the Sixth World's job to stop them. Their job is not an easy one, as runners are generally more skilled, and better equipped. This section provides information about the security techniques you can throw at your players to keep them on their toes.

HIGH THREAT RESPONSE

By this time in the Sixth World, megacorporations and other power groups have being using and defending against professional shadowrunners for decades. Having to deal with runners is nothing new and thus the tactics to counter runners in a cost-efficient manner have had time to mature. Any organization with assets that are worth (potentially) sending a team of runners to steal or destroy will have spent some time thinking about how they are going to protect against the possibility.

With a few extremely rare exceptions, no organization will be able to field front-line security forces that are a direct match against a professional shadowrunner team. Paying for such highly trained and well-equipped individuals is expensive, and the cost to pay them to guard a location or person round-the-clock is beyond the realm of possibility. Thus, the first line of defense that runners are likely to encounter are guards or equipment that they significantly outclass. Front-line security forces are (generally) in place to maintain order at a location, and keep away the more "causal" destructive elements. They cannot stand up to professional criminals, and they know it.

What these organizations have is some kind of High Threat Response (HTR) or backup team in place. These teams consist of forces that are roughly equivalent to the kind of training and equipment that a runner team fields. HTR teams can be part of the overall security forces of the organization that owns the facility, or they can be from a different organization that has been contracted to provide HTR service for the owners. This is done by security companies such as Lone Star, Knight Errant, Eagle Security, and many others. Competition is fierce in this market, and security threats are widespread enough in the Sixth World that these services are fairly affordable. Even companies with a fairly modest income can afford to have an HTR team on call. Of course, there are varying price points for this service, so the level of response and how quickly it can be mobilized varies. Runners will often use this to their advantage, but time is not on their side.

HTR TEAM RESPONSE TIME

The idea of having some kind of High Threat Response is ubiquitous in the Sixth World, since it's only a matter of time before some threat materializes somewhere. They can be a public law enforcement contractor like Lone Star, or a private team employed by the organization that owns the location. How quickly an HTR team responds to a situation depends on the security level of the location where the threat is occurring. Higher security levels mean that the government or corporation that owns the location has paid for better security and thus response times. Lower security levels represent areas that cannot afford top-flight security. At the lowest (most basic) level, HTR response happens only when the general public is threatened on a large scale. Determining the security level of a location is entirely up to the gamemaster.

HTR TEAM RESPONSE TIME

SECURITY LEVEL	EXAMPLE	RESPONSE TIME
AAA	Downtown Seattle, megacorp HQ, military installation	1D6 minutes
AA	Luxury residential area	1D6 + 4 minutes
A	Mid- to high-level residential, common corporations	2D6 + 3 minutes
B	Mid-level residential, industrial	1D6 x 5 minutes
C	Low-end residential, storage areas	1D6 x 10 minutes
Z	Redmond Barrens, Chicago Containment Zone	2D6 hours

COUNTERING PHYSICAL THREATS

When a front-line security force knows that the HTR team is on its way, their job is to delay the runner team as long as possible. These front-line guards know they are outmatched and, barring having a death wish, will not engage in a stand-up fight against a group of professional runners. They will use a series of tactics to put the odds more in their favor, with the objective of delaying runners as long as they can until their backup or High Threat Response team arrives. Even HTR team members will employ these tactics to gain every advantage they can get.

COVER

Standing out in the open proves nothing except that a person is stupid enough to get themselves killed. The best body armor of all is not getting shot. To this end, security personnel should *never* be standing out in the open in a gunfight unless they are caught by surprise. If they know that shooting is about to start, the *first* thing that any security guard will do is find some cover. If there is none available, they will withdraw from that location to a place where there is some cover. Cover has significant effect on the accuracy of shots during a fight (see **Taking Cover,** p. 166).

If combat *must* take place in an area where there is no cover, there are some options to create it. Anything that obscures visibility in some form generates the same sort of effect as having cover: attacking shots miss. Creating cover can come from smoke grenades (p. 435), flash bangs (p. 435), or with magical effects (p. 289). Often, security personnel will have control over the environment around them. With this control, cover could be created simply by turning off the lights in select portions of the building. This can be used as part of an attack or part of a retreat, as needed. If the security force has some form of vision enhancement or modification

COVER AND ADVANCE
Expecting enemy fire from Target Area (X), Team 1 covers Team 2 as they move forward to space 2A.
Team 2 then does the same for Team 1 as they move to space 1A.
Both teams advance toward the target.
X
1A
2A
1
2

to compensate for vision conditions, this technique will be readily employed. Of course the intruders may also have those vision modifications, but the defenders don't know that for sure and are willing to try.

SUPPRESSION

When engaging a group of enemies, security teams will work in coordination to gain better positions on the enemy. While moving (advancing or retreating), a team will employ *covering fire*. This is a tactic where one member of the team fires at the enemy in order to keep them from making effective attacks while other members of their team change their position(s). When providing covering fire, a team member will be firing a *Suppression* attack (see p. 179).

AMBUSHES

Local guards know the terrain or layout of the place they are guarding. There may even be specific "chokepoints" or designated ambush points. These will be areas where intruders are "forced" to go, and give the defenders a massive advantage in cover and firing positions. Whenever possible, a security team will use the ambush or chokepoints that are in their area. These may be areas specifically designed to provide an advantage to the defenders, constructed for security reasons, or they could be areas that, due to their layout, make natural ambush sites. Whether "natural" or specifically constructed, an ambush site is any place that gives a distinct advantage to defenders that hold the position, while putting the attackers in a disadvantageous position. This includes areas where the defenders have good cover while the attackers have none, or where the defenders are in an elevated position relative to the attackers.

Aside from position, the other key element in ambushes is surprise (see **Surprise**, p. 192). A defender that is not aware of an attack is unable to effectively defend against it. While runners use ambushes and surprise more often than security forces, the defenders will look for any opportunity to use the same tactics against intruders.

TRAPS

Corporations are always looking for the most cost-effective way to defend their property. Security guards are expensive, while inanimate or automated objects are much more cost efficient. If an intruder can be stopped without having to put any expensive personnel in danger, all the better. Traps can take almost any shape or form, and can be intended to slow, capture, or kill intruders that trigger them. The two essential elements of a trap are the *trigger* and the *response*.

The *trigger* element of a trap is the action or event that activates it. Traps need to be tied to some sort of sensor designed to detect the desired conditions. The sensor can be something as simple as a trip line or pressure plate, or it can be as complex as an electronic sensor keyed to a biometrics database or RFID scanner. When designing a trigger, the defenders need to think not just about when the trap *should* be triggered, but when it *shouldn't* be triggered as well. So, unless the trap is set up to protect an area that no one is ever expected to go, it will need some sort of method to avoid triggering the trap for authorized personnel. This could mean some sophisticated system where the trap's sensor identifies friend from foe, or that the trap is just not set up when authorized personnel are in the area. The various sensory devices that can be used as part of a trigger are listed under *Security Devices* (p. 362).

TACTICS REFERENCES

SECURITY TACTIC	PAGE
Cover	p. 190
Smoke Grenade	p. 435
Flash Bang	p. 435
Suppression	p. 179

The second part of a trap is the *response* to the trigger event. This is the business end of the trap, where things happen. A trap response all depends on what the owner of the trap wants it to accomplish. The owner may want to merely delay an enemy or may want to eliminate them. The desired outcome completely dictates the design of the trap, but the possibilities are essentially limitless. Traps can close doors to lock intruders in a certain area, or they can release gas or some other kind of chemical agent. More lethal traps can deploy monofilament trip lines, or activate automated gun drones. Devices that can be used as part of a trap response are listed under *Security Devices* (p. 362).

COUNTERING MATRIX THREATS

The world of *Shadowrun* experienced a technical as well as a magical revolution. Advances in computer technology have revolutionized how metahumans interact with the electronic world around them. Things are connected and accessible on an unprecedented level, giving those connected to the Matrix a fantastic wealth of information and power. However, with this access comes the risk that those with malicious intentions will subvert the system, and abuse the connections of the Matrix. Right from the beginning, those who planned and engineered the Matrix were aware of the need for security. For many years, this was a difficult battle for those looking for security, with the hackers always staying one step ahead of them. After many long years of work, though, the Matrix powers that be have finally gotten their wish, and the Matrix of 2075 is more secure than it has ever been—and more controlled.

ACCESS LIMITATION

The first and most basic way to protect a device is to limit access to it. By default, all devices run in normal mode, announcing their presence and inviting connections from other devices. The entire Matrix is built on of the premise of devices connecting to one another and being accessible so that people can get information or services from them. In public areas, law enforcement services require people to run their personal device in normal mode so their identity can be verified. When running normally, devices can interact with any other random device that happens to be nearby. However, some devices, such as those connected to a security system, have no such need. In most cases, these devices will be running silent (see p. 235).

In addition to running silent, network administrators work to limit the accessibility of their important devices to the bare minimum necessary for their functioning. The primary way of doing this is to increase the Noise rating for those in the vicinity who may have less-than-honest intentions. If the device is outside, landscaping such as earthworks and vegetation can be used to increase Noise between the device and an attacker. If the device is inside, wireless inhibiting wallpaper or paint can increase Noise to the device, or a Faraday cage used in select sections of the building can cut off access from the outside completely. So, a corporation's top-secret research system will almost never be accessible from outside of the building where it is located. The system may only be accessible from inside the building, or even a specific area (or room) in the building. By forcing potential hackers to have to be in a specific *physical* location to perform their intrusion, the physical security of the area becomes part of the Matrix security as well.

PANS AND WANS

Another way to protect individual devices is to connect them as slaves to a master device in a personal area network (PAN) or wide area network (WAN) (see p. 233). By connecting less sophisticated and vulnerable devices to a single more powerful and secure Master device, the entire network is made more secure. When configured in this way, every device uses

the Rating of the Master instead of its own when doing any sort of test. This makes all devices in the network as strong as the Master device, which greatly increases the security of the entire network. However, the protection provided in this manner is still a device's inherent protection. It is just protection from a more sophisticated device.

The most common way that a hacker will circumvent the protection of a network is by making a direct connection (see p. 232) to a device that is part of that network. To make a direct connection, a hacker must have a physical (wired) connection to the device, which necessitates close physical proximity. With this connection, the hacker can target the device separately from its Master, and thus gain marks on the device or its Master while making tests against the much lower Rating of the device. Network administrators and security spiders are well aware of the vulnerability of a direct connection to devices on a network and will take steps to protect that vulnerability. This usually means physically protecting the device—for example, placing it behind a wall, inside a locked casing, or put somewhere difficult to access physically. Since the device will normally, legitimately, be accessed via wireless placing it in an awkward physical location doesn't pose any inconvenience for the device owners.

HOSTS AND IC

Any network owner that is really serious about protecting their devices will use a Host (see p. 359). A Host is an integrated system architecture where all devices exist inside a single Matrix entity that can run more complex programs. Creating a Host is akin to constructing a building and putting important things inside. None of the devices can be accessed without first gaining access (via a mark) to the Host itself. The Host then becomes the Master for all of the devices within it, thus providing the same protection as a WAN. However, the biggest additional protection that a Host provides is the ability to run Intrusion Countermeasures (IC) programs.

IC are a unique class of program that are like a drone, but in the virtual realm of the Matrix. IC are constructed with a specific set of abilities and given a defined purpose. Some IC look for intruders, others inhibit intruders, and a few can harm a hacker's equipment or even their person. Although IC are fairly single-minded and not terribly adaptable, they are very good at performing their intended purpose when set on it. The real strength in IC comes in the swiftness of their response, and their resiliency. IC are run as Programs on the Host, and thus can be activated just as quickly as any other program: in a single Combat Turn.

This means that IC can respond to a threat within seconds of it being identified. IC programs can be crashed, but can simply be reactivated the very next turn by the Host. This means that IC can be delayed, but never permanently destroyed. A Host can have up to its Rating in active IC programs at one time.

IC are not terribly selective in their targeting, however, so IC owners need to be careful to not attack legitimate users. For this reason, as well as the speed with which IC can be deployed, Hosts will generally not have many IC programs running constantly. The only kind of IC that is safe to keep running is a Patrol IC. A Patrol IC acts like a physical security guard would, moving about the Host, validating identities and looking into suspicious activity. If an intruder or nefarious activity is detected, the more proactive IC programs can be launched by the Host.

Hosts and IC programs are generally affordable, so any organization serious about protecting their Matrix assets will install them. As a result, this is the most common kind of system that a hacker will encounter. Creating a Host doesn't prevent system administrators for employing other forms of network protection such as Access Limitation (above), and the Host will (of course) exist on a specific Grid.

GODS AND SPIDERS

Matrix security specialists know that even the best and most sophisticated electronic security measures can be circumvented by someone with enough skill. Ultimately, protecting things on the Matrix comes down to the last line of defense: spiders, GODs, and demiGODs. A metahuman security professional whose job is overseeing the security of a particular network (or group of networks) is referred to as a spider. A spider will have much (if not all or more) of the same skills and equipment as any intruding hacker, with the only difference being that they are defending the system rather than attacking it. Just like the physical security forces of a building, the individual abilities and tactics of a spider vary wildly. They do whatever they can to attempt to protect the system by slowing down or stopping the intruder. Since spiders are considered the owners or administrators of a system, they can command any of the devices in that system without having to gain any marks, since they already have the owner mark for all devices. They have the authority to launch or shut down IC, raise or cancel alarms, or even perform an emergency shutdown of the entire system. Spiders do their job exclusively in the Matrix, and so can be on-site for whatever network they are protecting, or remote logging in from elsewhere. Having a spider on-site generally leads to faster response times to network threats, but it leaves the spider vulnerable to physical attacks.

The heavy hitters, the virtual boogeymen, of the Matrix are the Grid Overwatch Division (GODs) of the Corporate Court and their branches, the demiGODs, that provide security on individual grids. These are the best, brightest, and most well-equipped security forces in the Matrix, and something most hackers rightly fear. They respond to the most serious security breaches, or anything that happens to catch their interest. Repeated intrusions, especially if they go mostly undetected, may draw the attention of the local demiGODs, as well as a particularly persistent or noisy intrusion. A demiGOD is like a hacker in some ways, but has top-level training and the best equipment that nuyen can buy. A GOD agent, or "G-Man," can be expected to have the equivalent of an owner mark on any device that exists on their grid.

In some circumstances, technomancers will be employed to protect a system as its spider. In this case a technomancer will use the full extent of their unusual abilities to protect the network including compiling sprites. These instances continue to be rare, however, due to the scarcity of the technomancer talent and the corporations' continued mistrust of them.

WIRED SECURITY

It is possible for a network owner to decide to forgo wireless connections entirely and instead connect their system using traditional wires. This is rare due to the inconvenience it presents, but still an option for those mistrusting of the security wireless offers. All Matrix devices connect via wireless by default, with many of the less expensive ones not having a wired connection option. If an organization wants to wire a network, the cabling must be purchased and installed throughout the location where the network exists. This limits the placement of devices and requires maintenance of the proper connections. Wired networks are still vulnerable in many of the same ways as wireless networks. If a wire is breached and tapped anywhere along its length, the signals can be intercepted and retransmitted via wireless anyway. It should be noted, though, that between grids, hosts, IC, spiders, and GODs, corporations are feeling very confident in the security of their wireless networks. This means that runners are only likely to encounter wired security in the hands of the exceedingly protective or paranoid.

DEVICE RATINGS

DEVICE	RATING
Vending Machine	1
Camera	1
Door Lock	2
Sensor	2
Common Drone	3
Security Drone	3
Workstation	3
Corporate Server	4
Security Controller	4

COUNTERING MAGIC THREATS

Magic in the Sixth World is both very powerful and very rare. Even those with magical talent often do not have enough to do any kind of magic that would be meaningful from a security standpoint. As such, acquiring any sort of magical security is fairly expensive. However, magic and magical threats have been a part of the world for long enough that corporations and other potential targets of magical threats have developed a series of strategies for dealing with them.

TACTICS FOR MUNDANES

The first and most cost-effective tactic for dealing with magical threats is to provide special training for mundane (non-magical) security forces to deal with magical threats. Although the only *direct* counter to magic is more magic, there are things that mundanes can do that will eliminate and sometimes inhibit magical threats. These tactics will be the first thing that security forces employ when faced with a magical threat.

Before anything can be done, a magical threat must be **identified**. If a front-line security guard has received any kind of professional training, they will have been taught how to identify a variety of magical threats: metahuman magicians, critters, and spirits, among others. If magical activity is identified in an opposing force (see **Perceiving Magic**, p. 280), the security guards immediately act to counter it.

Once identified, one way to deal with the threat is by **target priority.** There are many elaborate and complicated ways to deal with an opposing magician, but the simplest (and often most effective) is to fill the enemy magician with bullets. This is where the common street saying "geek the mage first" comes from. When an opposing security force identifies a magician opponent, they will likely target the magician first or with their most effective weapons. Even wounding an enemy magician without actually putting them down affects how well they can cast spells. Of course, taking down an enemy magician solves the magical threat problem completely. This technique will be favored if the security team sees or feels that they have an advantage in physical firepower over the runner team. Target priority can and will be combined with other physical combat techniques such as ambushes (see *Countering Physical Threats*, above).

When force is not adequate (or available), **limiting visibility** can be just as effective. Magic is (almost) entirely dependent on what the magician can see. If a magician can't see something, they can't cast a spell against it. Anything a security force does to limit a magician's ability to see them will inhibit their ability to use magic against them. Security forces can limit visibility in a variety of ways: cover, flash bangs, smoke, or changing lighting conditions. However, limiting visibility is purely a defensive tactic and will be used in combination with the security team withdrawing to give time for on-call magical backup, or to change the location of the engagement to somewhere more favorable for the security team.

CONTRACTED MAGICAL SECURITY

Contracting magical security does have its drawbacks. Most organizations will not be able to afford to have Awakened security personnel on site 24/7, so magical security will often be in the form of a contracted "on call" operative or force. When a magical threat is identified, the magic backup is called into action. The first response of a magical security contractor is usually to scout and confirm the magical threat astrally. If a magical threat is confirmed, the astrally scouting magician may summon a spirit (or call a bound spirit) to assist immediately, if that level of service has been purchased. Depending on the contract, the magician may stay and observe the situation astrally, assisting however they can, or return to their meat body to respond to the threat physically. Often the magical backup will arrive as part of a High Threat Response team, but sometimes the magic backup will come just to aid the existing security force. The details of the arrangement between the front-line security forces and the magical contractor are up to the gamemaster.

MAGICAL BARRIERS

An extremely cost-effective method of magical protection is the use of magical barriers. Any company that offers magical contracting services will provide an option to establish magical barriers as part of their services. Barriers can be established in the astral plane to protect sensitive areas from observation by astral entities (such as an astrally projecting magician), or they can be established on the physical plane at critical areas to add protection to those on the other side of the barrier. Magical barriers are a passive measure, and organizations will use them knowing that they will only slow down magical intruders, at best, but they are inexpensive as magical protections go. Being one of the most basic services that magical contractors provide, competition has driven the price of magical barriers down to the point that nearly any corporation or organization will be able to afford them. In addition to creating and renewing them if necessary, the magician that created the barrier will know when it has been breached, attacked, or destroyed and will inform whoever is to be contacted in the protected organization.

CRITTERS AND SPIRITS

Metahumans are not the only, and often not even the most effective, basis for magical security. While the

ability to manipulate or even perceive the astral realm is extremely rare to metahumanity, awakened critters and spirits exist there as a natural state. For this reason they make ideal security forces, if they can be trained to perform the job.

Spirits (see p. 303) are fairly easy to employ for security. They merely need to be summoned and set the Task of protecting an area in some way. When employed in a security role, due to the long time frames involved, spirits are almost always bound. To set a spirit in a security role, it must be given a task that uses one of its services. Spirits are characteristically ornery and narrow-minded, especially when bound to long-term service, so the instructions given for the security service must be simple yet specific. A spirit could be used to report astral activity in the area, attack anyone in the restricted area during unauthorized hours, or other tasks with specific parameters and goals. The exact nature of the service that a bound spirit is performing is up to the gamemaster.

Awakened Critters are employed in a security role for most of the same reasons as spirits. Critters have advantages and disadvantages over spirits in the same role. Critters are more permanent than spirits, in that once they are trained and deployed, they will remain and do not have a limited resource such as Services. However, critters take far longer to get to the point where they can be used in a security role, requiring a lengthy (and often expensive) training process. As such, the cost to employ Awakened critters or bound spirits in a security role is generally equivalent, so it would be up to the whims of the security forces (and the gamemaster) which creature is employed. Awakened critters are used because they can perceive astral space as well as physical space, making identifying astral entities trivial for them. Additionally, like spirits, they can engage astral entities in combat, which makes them a significant threat. Depending on the critter, they can bring additional exotic powers that perform a lot of the same roles within a security team as a magician, such as a barghest's paralyzing howl. Even though critters require maintenance and specialized handling, and they can sometimes be unpredictable, the advantages they provide for mundane security forces against magical threats makes them extremely valuable.

SECURITY CRITTER REFERENCES

CRITTER	PAGE
Barghest	403
Basilisk	403
Hellhound	405

DRONES

Since magic first returned and ushered in the Sixth World, it has been connected with living things. Magic has always flowed more readily in the living and been inhibited by the mechanical or highly processed. Only the most powerful and talented magicians can affect highly processed mechanical objects, and even then at significant cost to themselves. For these reasons, drones have become an effective counter to magical threats. Since drones are highly processed, unnatural, mechanical objects, they inherently resist magical effects. They are immune to spells that target purely organic or sentient beings and are well armed and armored to deal with physical spells. They also pack a significant threat in firepower. Drones are manufactured on a mass scale and are very cost effective to employ in any security role. This makes them extremely popular and a particularly good counter to magical threats. It is drones' weakness to other kinds of attacks (such as hacking), however, that keep them from being the overwhelmingly most popular choice.

SECURITY DEVICES

LANDSCAPING

Landscaping, sometimes an overlooked component of physical security, can help provide obstacles or barriers. This includes everything from the placement of trees and shrubs to working with the surrounding land or creating hills, gullies, and lakes. The idea is to make it difficult for unauthorized personnel to enter the grounds without being spotted, trapped, intercepted, or maybe even killed. Landscaping may also be designed to prevent an intruder (or protected personnel) from escaping easily, so that security personnel can easily catch and detain them if alerted to their presence. Trees, dense brush, and hedges can provide cover for sensors, wires, cameras, tiger pits, secret entrances or exits, or automated gun systems. Along with ponds and lakes, they can also provide natural barriers. These features are not usually planted adjacent to buildings themselves, so as not to provide cover or entry assistance for intruders (such as a tall tree allowing for entry into a second- or third-story window). Dense brush and ground cover are also difficult for an intruder to bypass without creating noise (apply an appropriate modifier to a character's Infiltration Tests) and may be coupled with acoustic sensors. Foliage also increases Noise (p. 230) for anyone trying to access wireless devices on the other side of the landscaping.

BARRIERS

Barriers include fences, walls, and other obstructions that serve as a deterrent to keep people and animals out, prevent intruders from escaping, or deter surveil-

lance or terrorist attacks (like car bombs). These can be strewn about the perimeter, set along restricted roadways, or integrated into a building's internal or outer security. They may be supplemented with various sensors, cameras, gun turrets, or scanners (see below). Rules for climbing over barriers can be found on p. 134.

Wooden, stone, chain-link, and electrified fences are most likely set around the perimeter and may feature barbed wire, concertina wire, or even monowire along the top. Climbing past fencetop wiring requires a Climbing + Agility (3) Test; if the character fails, she takes damage. See the Fencing Table for the thresholds needed to spot an electrified fence (as opposed to a regular fence) or monowire with a Perception Test, as well as the damages these defensive features can cause to someone who fails to bypass them. Damage is resisted with Body + Armor as per normal. Note that protective mats may be thrown over barbed/concertina wire or electric fencing to climb over them without damage.

Walls come in all sorts of compositions—usually brick, stone, plascrete, concrete, or drywall—and may be specifically intended to protect against explosions or penetration. For details on attacking through or bypassing walls, see **Barriers**, p. 197. Plumbing, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems are often found within walls and can increase the wall's Armor rating (p. 197).

FENCING TABLE

DIFFICULTY	THRESHOLD	DAMAGE
Barbed	1	4P
Concertina	1	5P
Monowire	3	8P
Electrified	2	6S

(See *Electricity Damage*, p. 170)

DOORS, WINDOWS, & LOCKS

Doors and windows are common entrance and egress points not only for normal use but also for breaking-and-entering. Doors follow the standard rules for Barriers (p. 197) and are typically augmented with locks, alarms, and/or sensors (see below). Windows tend to be mirrored in 2075 (preventing an outside spellcaster from targeting anything inside), though their tinting is often voice- or wireless-controlled. Transparent concrete is also used, providing all the lighting of glass with the barrier value of a concrete wall.

Key locks are the simplest kind, involving the use of tumblers and metal keys or combination code dials to open doors instead of cards or some other device. They are also not in very common use due to reliance on more sophisticated means of security, but some places (like private safes or low-end businesses) may still use them out of nostalgia, because they can't afford better, or because rarity equates to better security. Defeating a key lock requires a Locksmith + Agility [Physical] (Lock Rating, 1 Combat Turn) Extended Test. Autopickers (p. 447) add their Rating in dice to this test; their Rating may also be used in place of Locksmith skill.

Transponder-embedded keys contain a calibrated resistor that completes a circuit in the lock. In order to pick such a lock by hand, an electronics kit is needed to generate the appropriate electrical characteristics. This requires a successful Hardware + Logic [Mental] (Lock Rating, 1 minute) Extended Test at the same time the lock is picked. If the same character is picking the lock and calibrating the electrical feed, apply a -2 dice pool modifier to both tests.

Powered magnetic locks, **maglocks**, are widespread in 2075 and come in a wide range of sophistication. Maglock "keys" can be physical (keypad, swipe card, proximity card, memory string), biometric (see below), or any combination thereof. Maglocks are often accessible via the local network (wired or wireless) and may be monitored by a security hacker/rigger. Maglock systems often log all usages, keeping track of the time, date, and identity of each user. The first step to bypassing a maglock is to remove the case and access the maglock's electronic guts. This requires a successful Locksmith + Agility [Physical] (Maglock Rating x 2, 1 Combat Turn) Extended Test. If all else fails, the case can be smashed or shot off; treat the case as if it has a Barrier rating equal to the maglock rating. Overzealous attempts to break the case may harm the electronics inside. Re-assembling the case afterwards requires the same test. Some maglock systems come equipped with anti-tamper systems, rated between 1 and 4. In order to bypass the anti-tamper circuits, an additional Locksmith + Agility [Physical] (anti-tamper system rating) Test must be made. If this fails, an alarm is triggered.

Keypads utilize an access code (often different access codes for different users). Unless the code is known, defeating a keypad requires rewiring the internal electronics. This means cracking open the case (see above) and then rewiring the circuits—another Locksmith + Agility [Physical] (Maglock Rating x 2, 1 Combat Turn) Extended Test. A maglock sequencer (see p. 448) may also be used instead; make an Opposed Test between the sequencer and maglock ratings. If the sequencer wins, the maglock opens. (Note that the case must still be opened for a sequencer to be applied.)

Cardreaders verify the authenticity of swipe cards or RFID proximity cards. They can be defeated using the same method as for keypads—by removing the case and tampering with the works. Maglock passkeys (p. 448) may also be used to defeat cardreaders and don't require breaking the case open. If a valid keycard is acquired, it can be copied with a keycard copier (p. 447) in order to create a forged keycard. Make an Opposed

Test between the passkey/forged keycard rating and the maglock rating. If the passkey/forged keycard wins, the maglock opens.

Print scanners scan fingerprints, palm prints, retinal prints, or even the pattern of blood vessels in the face or palm. One method to defeat a print scanner is to coerce an authorized user to apply their prints. Alternately, a synthetic print glove-like membrane (a "sleeve") can be manufactured for fingerprints and thumbprints with a cellular glove molder (an authorized print is necessary to copy from, see p. 447). Retinal prints may also be duplicated with the retinal duplication cybereye accessory (p. 453). If a fake print is used, make an Opposed Test between the duplicate and the maglock rating; if the fake wins, the maglock accepts it.

Voice recognition systems require a vocal response from an approved user's voice, usually within a certain amount of time. If the response is not given within the time limit, or someone not approved answers, the system sounds an alarm. Characters can only defeat voice recognition systems by "speaking" with the voice of an approved user—by using a recording, some other simulation, or the real voice. Voice modulator cyberware (see p. 452) can also be used. An Opposed Test must be made between the voice recognition system and the equipment used to bypass it; whichever generates more hits, wins.

Breath, cellular, and DNA scanners collect a sample of the user's cells, either off the finger/palm, via hair suction, through exhaled particles, or something similar, and analyze the genetic material. In order to fool such a system, you need a sample of the correct genetic material, preserved in a specially formulated enzyme bath. The enzyme bath can be synthesized in a chemistry shop with a Chemistry + Logic (5, 1 hour) Extended Test.

Facial recognition scanners use imaging lasers, thermographic, and/or ultrasonic waves to map a person's face. These are one of the least intrusive, but also least accurate, biometric recognition systems. Facial recognition systems are useful not just for letting authorized people in, but also for identifying unwanted people and keeping them out. Prosthetic makeup and biosculpting can be used with varying degrees of effectiveness against facial recognition; make an Opposed Test pitting Disguise + Intuition [Mental] against the Device rating. Apply a +2 dice pool modifier to the character if the system is picking the disguised character out of a crowd.

SENSORS AND SCANNERS

Good **lighting**, both indoor and outdoor, can be a further deterrent to intrusion, as it raises the chances for security to spot unauthorized personnel. Lights are usually controlled via wireless to activate at predetermined times (like outdoor lights, which are only needed at night) or events (like when a sensor detects movement in its area; see *Sensors* below). Indoor lighting can either be manually controlled with a regular on/off switch, or programmed to respond to motion or daily activity (such as the start of the business day). Most switches can be subverted with a Hardware + Logic [Mental] (5, 1 Combat Turn) Extended Test. Most lighting is incandescent, fluorescent, LED, or white halogen quartz, though occasionally gas-discharge may be used for high-wattage exterior lighting (taking 5 minutes to warm up).

Alarms, a form of passive security, are one of the most basic elements of a security system. Alarms serve to alert guards, security hackers/riggers, or remote monitoring services that something is amiss and must be dealt with. Alarms may be silent, alerting only the security or police in order to catch intruders unaware, or they may go off as flashing lights and loud warning klaxons that resound throughout the building. Individual components of a security system may be alarmed, like a fire door that triggers a warning bell when opened. Many alarms, particularly on doors and windows, are based on electrical circuits. While closed, the circuit is complete and no alarm will sound. If the door or window is opened, however, the circuit is broken, triggering the alarm. Windows may have alarm circuits wired into the glass, so if the glass is broken an alarm goes off. To bypass such alarms, the circuit's electrical contacts must be fooled while the door/window is open. This requires a Hardware + Logic [Mental] (5, 1 minute) Extended Test, though depending on the design it may be more difficult.

A **wire** is one of the most basic types of security scanners. Breaking the beam or wire is often tied to some sort of alarm system to notify security personnel, but can also trigger other kinds of automated security systems (see below). In some rare cases, the wire may have a more lethal purpose and is intended to harm the target. Stringing monowire across a potential intrusion point is a common choice for this purpose. If a character fails a Perception Test (p. 135) they will run into the wire and trigger its effect. This could be activating the alarm system, or taking damage. For wires intended to harm, use the damage listed in the Fencing Table (above).

Trip beams are used as perimeter alarms or across entrances. Trip beams consist of laser emitters (visible or infrared), mirrors, and laser detectors. If the beam of light is interrupted (by someone or something passing through it), the alarm goes off. These systems can be very complex and sometimes labyrinthine, requiring anywhere from several to twenty or more mirrors and reflectors in order to aim the light beam where desired. Noticing a trip beam requires a Perception + Intuition [Mental] (2) Test for visible beams, or a threshold of 3 for infrared beams. Laser beams are more noticeable in smoke or if an aerosol spray is used, reducing the threshold to 1. Squeezing past a trip beam maze requires an Escape Artist + Agility [Physical] Test against a gamemaster-determined threshold. Trip beams may also be fooled by simultaneously lining up proxy laser emitters

of the proper wattage into each detector on the system, requiring a similar Escape Artist + Agility [Physical] Test. A calibrated system of mirrors may also be used to re-arrange the trip beam pattern so that someone can pass through.

Pressure pads complement any indoor security in areas that are restricted or off-limits to unauthorized personnel (particularly at night, when no one should be about). These are weight-triggered sensors that will react to any amount of weight, or when there is too much weight beyond a pre-programmed amount (where the maximum allowable weight is five or ten pounds heavier than the heaviest authorized individual). A **pressure mesh** works similarly, but is largely for outdoor use and installed in the ground, and is less sensitive than pads. Noticing pressure mesh or pads is very difficult, requiring a Perception Test threshold of 3 for pads and 4 for mesh. If a character steps on a pad, however, it is more apparent (reduce the threshold by 2)—but by then it is usually too late. After a character steps onto the mesh or pad, however, a second Perception Test should be rolled: Threshold 1 for pads and Threshold 3 for mesh. If successful, the character can attempt to remove the pressure before it exceeds the device's weight allowance. This is very difficult, requiring a Reaction + Intuition (3) Test, with the character's Body serving as a negative dice pool modifier.

Motion sensors pick up on movement. They transmit an ultrasonic field, and react to changes in that field when anything enters it. Intruders may detect the ultrasonic field by using an ultrasound sensor set to passive mode within 5 meters. Defeating a motion sensor requires that characters move very slowly through the field, one half-meter per Combat Turn, and succeeding in an Sneaking + Agility [Physical] (3) Test. Twitchy, wired-up characters will find this very uncomfortable; apply a negative dice pool modifier equal to their extra Initiative Dice (that is, any dice beyond the first one).

Capacitance wire, or **proximity wire**, detects the electrical charge of a metahuman body (or animal) within 2 meters. It is often used around a building's perimeter fencing, on secure entranceways, or on special objects, and either triggers a regular alarm or switches on security cameras and other measures. For redundancy, it might be used in conjunction with motion sensors.

Sound detectors and **vibration detectors** utilize sensitive microphones to pick up sounds/vibrations. They can be programmed with pattern recognition algorithms to ignore some sounds/vibrations, but will easily pick up everything else not fitting within those parameters. Characters attempting to sneak by a known sound detector must succeed at an Infiltration + Agility [Physical] (3) Test (Silence or Stealth spells can also be used). Some sound detectors may be programmed to trigger an alert only when certain sounds are detected, such as gunshots (perhaps even triangulating the sound's origin with multiple detectors).

Security **cameras** fill a broad spectrum, from the standard visual type to low-light, infrared, and ultraviolet cameras or sensors. Cameras help security personnel maintain a secondary eye on every significant area of traffic when guards are patrolling, and maintain watch when personnel are not in physical or astral proximity. Infrared, also known as thermographic, picks up on body heat signatures (but may be fooled with an Improved Invisibility spell). One security trick is to use surfaces that are reflective on the infrared spectrum on corner areas, so that thermographic cameras can detect intruders from around corners where the cameras themselves cannot be easily seen. Low-light sensors amplify the ambient light in order to produce an image in darkened spots (making the camera harder to spot), but may be overpowered with bright light. Shadowrunners may take advantage of this with flash-bang grenades (p. 435). How well any of these cameras or sensors may be spotted will depend partially on how well they are hidden. Typical cameras on fixed or pivoting mounts can be easily seen if characters are looking for them. Smaller micro-cameras have a threshold of 3 to be spotted with a Perception Test. If the camera is hidden, modify the Threshold to spot it per the Perception Thresholds Table (p. 136), applying any appropriate modifiers.

Olfactory scanners, also known as chemical detection systems or chemsniffers, analyze molecules in the air for nitrogen-rich particles like those given off by explosives or firearm ammunition. To detect explosives or ammunition, roll a dice pool equal to the chemsniffer's rating against a threshold 2 (3 if the explosives/ammo are hermetically sealed). Apply modifiers as noted on the Chemical Detection Modifiers table.

CHEMICAL DETECTION MODIFIERS TABLE

SITUATION	MODIFIER
Every 10 rounds of ammunition	+1
Every grenade	+1
Every 30 grams of (non-plastique) explosive	+1
Every 100 grams of plastique	+1
Item contained in plastic	-2

Olfactory scanners can also be used as **pheromone scanners** to detect the pheromones that metahuman bodies release into the air. These are uncommon, but can be useful for detecting individuals who have otherwise effectively concealed themselves via technological or magical means from regular security devices. Pheromone scanners are sophisticated enough to tell the difference

between a metahuman and an animal and can also pinpoint gender, but are otherwise not advanced enough to single out an individual. In order to pick up a scent, the scanner rolls its Device Rating against a threshold of 3 (2 for characters with tailored pheromone bioware).

Magnetic anomaly detectors (MADs) detect metallic substances for the purpose of finding concealed weaponry. Naturally, MADs do not work against non-metallic substances like wood, stone, or plastic. To determine if the detector finds a weapon, make a test using the device's rating as the dice pool; a single hit detects any ferrous-metal weapons or objects (guns, knives, etc).

Millimeter wave detection systems, also known as **cyberware scanners**, process video taken in the millimeter wave spectrum to identify the energy signature of cyberware and concealed items (specifically weapons) on a person. These devices can "see through" thick layers of clothing and other concealment to identify items from a distance of fifteen meters away. To determine if the detector scans cyberware or a prohibited item, roll the Device Rating and compare the hits scored to the thresholds given on the Cyberware Scanner Table. Millimeter wave scans can detect any non-biological item by its shape and composition, assuming the item is listed in the device's database. If the threshold is reached, the scanner detects the item/implant and notes its general locations and type; additional hits provide more detail (function, model, grade, etc.).

CYBERWARE SCANNER TABLE

ITEM	THRESHOLD
Standard cyberware, weapons	1
Alphaware, other items	2
Betaware	3
Deltaware	5+
SITUATION	**MODIFIER**
2 or more implants/items	+1
4 or more implants/items	+2
6+ implants/items	+3

AUTOMATED DEFENSES

Automated gun systems are simply weapon-mounted drones placed in fixed locations (usually with a 180-degree firing arc) or on slide-mounted track systems. These systems are typically loaded with basic sensors and Targeting autosofts and follow all the standard rules for drones (see p. 269).

Containment systems entail a kind of trap mechanism: when an alarm is triggered, shutters drop down over windows, doors shut and lock, and sliding walls or gates may be activated. They may also include laser or monowire mazes and radio jamming. The objective is to detain intruders within a confined area, after which they may be either removed or "neutralized."

Gas delivery systems can be insidious, dispersing gas in a potentially undetectable manner. Dispersal systems can fill an area of 30 cubic meters in one Combat Turn. The gamemaster determines how far and how quickly a gas spreads. The gamemaster may secretly conduct Perception Tests to see if any characters detect the gas, basing the threshold on how noticeable the gas is (many gases are colorless and odorless). Characters equipped with an olfactory scanner (see p. 452) may be alerted by their gear. See p. 408 for details on various gases and how they will affect characters.

Marking systems are designed to tag intruders with a discreet mark so that they can be identified later if captured. Marking methods include ultraviolet dye, RFID tags, DNA-encoded material, or even nanite tags. The markers are typically sprayed unobtrusively over exits and other traffic areas.

IDENTIFICATION

Your average Joe Wageslave in the Sixth World doesn't give a second thought to their identity in the system. They get up in the morning, go to work, buy the groceries, pay the bills, and go to bed in their living space. They don't think about who knows who they are, how much their employer controls them, who those bill payments are going to, how their commlink knows what groceries they need this week, and who knows where they live. Yes, Joe Wageslave is pretty oblivious to the system that surrounds everything they do. But anyone who chooses to live off the grid (like shadowrunners) are all too aware of how the system of identity works.

SYSTEM IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (SIN)

The foundation of an identity in the Sixth World is the System Identification Number (SIN). If someone wanted to divide the world into two groups of people, it could be done by saying there are those who have a SIN and those who don't. That is, if you even consider the SINless to be "people," which some don't. Modern society in 2075 produces a staggering amount of information every second of every day: where you are, what you buy, and what you do. With the system producing all of these pieces of information, there needs to be an easy way to store, track, and correlate it. All of that information needs to be associated with a person somehow. That's where the SIN comes in. A SIN is issued to a person a birth, and stays with them (baring exceptional circumstances) for the rest of their life. A SIN identifies a

person in the global information system and is attached to every piece of information associated with them in the Matrix. No aspect of modern or legal life can function without a SIN. Those who don't have one can't get a job, can't buy food, can't even walk down the street. To the system, these people *don't exist*.

ISSUING A SIN

A SIN is issued by a country or extraterritorial corporation (AA or AAA rating) at the time a person becomes a citizen. This is generally when a person is born "legally" in that country somewhere—a hospital, clinic, or maybe even at home with the assistance of a Renraku DulaDrone™. A new SIN will be issued in the case of a change in citizenship. The SIN itself is a string of characters generated using some of the person's vital statistics fed into an incredibly complicated mathematical algorithm. This guarantees that no two SINs will ever be the same. However, this means that anyone with access to the proper software, like law enforcement agents and other government officials, can know several things just by looking at the SIN: your name, birth date, place of birth, and nation that issued the SIN. A set of biometric data including DNA, retinal scan, and fingerprints will also be taken and logged into the system, associated with the newly created SIN. All of this information is then registered with two master databases: one maintained by the country that issued the SIN, and the Global SIN Registry (GSINR) controlled by the Corporate Court. These datastores are among the most secure on the planet, with multiple off-line backups for each.

LICENSES

A basic SIN allows a person to function within the most basic parameters of the law. If a person wants to operate outside these very confining strictures, they need special permission in the form of a license. What actions or items require a license vary widely with the laws of the country, but there are some common similarities shown in the Common Licenses Table below. Acquiring a license (legally) is, again, dependent on the laws of the country. For the most part, acquiring a license involves making an application, paying some sort of fee, a SIN check, and possibly passing one or more certification, testing, or training programs. The exact details of acquiring a license are left up to the gamemaster, but government bureaucracies are notoriously slow and frustrating.

LICENSE EXAMPLES

LICENSE	SITUATION
Item	Any item with Availability "R"
Magic	License to practice magic, registered Awakened Individual
Spell Weapon	Knowledge and use of a single Combat Spell
Technomancy	Registered technomancer, license to use Resonance abilities
Occupational	Registered professional (doctor, nurse, electrician, private detective, etc.)

FAKE SIN DETAILS

RATING	ATTRIBUTES
1	Random anybody, age, nationality, and sex may not match; no supporting data
2	Rough match; sex matches, age and nationality "pretty close," no supporting data
3	Good match; sex, age, and nationality match; supporting data, but obviously fake
4	Casually plausible; sex, age, and nationality match; supporting data appears valid only on cursory checks
5	Good fit; all statistics match; valid biometrics for another person (with samples); some supporting data and history)
6	Alternate life; all statistics match; valid biometrics with samples; complete and entirely believable history

FAKE SINS

For those without the privilege (or curse) of being born with a SIN, there is very little choice in how they can live. You either get issued a real SIN after birth (which requires an act of government—good luck with that!), live your life on the outside (which most choose to do), or get yourself a fake SIN. Although SIN registry databases are incredibly secure, they are still accessible online (they have to be) which makes them vulnerable. Demand and value for fake SINs is such that many of the shadier organizations in the world, including all major criminal syndicates, make a business of creating fake SINs. Getting a fake SIN created and registered with all of the proper authorities is a long and involved process of hacking and data fraud that exploits loopholes and other identified flaws in the system. Generally speaking, the more time that is taken in crafting a false identity, the more believable (or "real") it becomes. Hastily created identities may work if someone just wants to be able to buy a Nuke 'em Burger at the Stuffer Shack, but it won't hold up to any sort of scrutiny.

The amount of time and care taken in creating a fake SIN is represented by its Rating. A low Rating SIN consists of only the most basic information—such as

the SIN number itself. Related information such as biometric data will likely be missing or obviously false if checked ("Hey, this is the DNA of a chicken ..."). Other issues may be the consistency, or fit, of the identity to the individual. If a runner just needs an identity—any identity—right now, they may end up purchasing a SIN for a ten-year-old Nigerian girl. Higher Rating, and thus more expensive, fake SINs have been lovingly crafted over time with a great deal of attention to detail. An identity will be chosen that matches the age and nationality of the person purchasing it, and it will have plausible supporting information such as travel and purchasing history. Biometric data associated with a high-Rating SIN will be from a real person with the same sex and nationality as the purchaser with (if the extra fee is paid) matching organic samples available (blood, skin cells, hair—just don't ask where they came from). For availability and prices of purchasing Fake SINs, see p. 367.

CHECKING A FAKE SIN

While having some sort of SIN is mandatory for a person to interact in any way with the "civilized" (as they would put it) world, the level to which the SIN is checked and verified varies widely based on the situation and who is doing the checking. In game terms the sophistication of the system doing the checking and how much information it is able to verify is represented by its Rating. Less sophisticated units will perform only the most basic checks, while more sophisticated ones will perform a deeper analysis with cross-verification. In game terms, the gamemaster should make a Simple Device Rating x 2 Test with a threshold equal to the rating of the fake SIN (use **Device Ratings**, p. 234, for SIN verification system ratings). If the number of hits is under the threshold, the system reports no problem. If the threshold is reached but not exceeded, the system reports that something seems "odd" with the SIN and will recommend that the operator investigate further. Whether the operator actually does anything is up to them. If the threshold is exceeded, the system reports the SIN as false and may immediately notify the authorities. At this point, the fake SIN is considered **burned**.

SIN VERIFICATION DETAILS

RATING	WHAT'S CHECKED
1	Do you have a SIN?
2	Basic redundancy check on the number and vital statistics
3	Redundancy check on number and statistics; query for external data attached to SIN
4	Verify all vital statistics; external data checked for obvious conflicts; biometric must be present
5	Full verification and consistency check; biometrics tested against sample
6	All possible verification; multiple biometric samples must match; random supporting data verified externally

BURNED SINS

When a fake SIN has been checked and found to be false, the SIN Verification System notes this immediately. If it is connected to the Matrix (and what isn't these days), it reports the fake SIN, via a special emergency message, back to the SIN registry system of the country in which the verification takes place. Any further use of the fake SIN automatically fails. At this point, the runner or person using the fake SIN should abandon it for good. If that's not an option, there is small chance that it can still be used. A SIN is only marked as burned instantly in the country where it was detected. Data sharing between countries is not always perfect or instantaneous. At the gamemaster's discretion, a SIN that has been burned in one country may not be burned in a different country.

DROP-IN LOCATIONS

More often than a gamemaster wants, characters will decide to go somewhere unexpected. This can leave the gamemaster in a bind, as they may have to create a detailed location on the fly. Even when they don't have to improvise, gamemasters sometimes have trouble creating the amount of detail that may be required (or desired) for a location. What follows in this section are a series of generic drop-in locations that can be used in your *Shadowrun* game. They can be used as-is, or taken as a starting point and then modified to suit the specific needs of the game.

HELL-HOLE BAR

When living your life from day to day is a mighty struggle, you can be sure that people are going to want a drink. The hell-hole bar is one of the only forms of organized business that a person is likely to find if they are wandering the Redmond Barrens, El Infierno, Aurora Warrens, or any other area of urban decay and abandonment. Getting a drink here can literally kill a person, felled either by the rough patrons of the bar or by the foul excuse for what they call liquor (brewed in some cobbled-together excuse for a still in the basement). However, since these areas almost never draw the eye of any law enforcement, or anyone with much self-respect for that matter, they make an ideal location to make a deal or have a meeting, away from any notice. Security in these kinds of places is generally very light.

The local gang might try to keep trouble away, or there might be a shotgun under the bar. Technology? Matrix access? Don't hold your breath.

SECRET RESEARCH STATION

If anything in the Sixth World can be certain, it is the fact that large corporations are always up to something secret. There are many reasons why a corporation might want to conduct research in a hidden or secret location, including keeping knowledge away from competitors, or keeping pesky governments with their "human rights laws" away from their exciting research. Underground or underwater secret research stations have been used numerous times over the years to house such projects. With the extremely limited access to these locations, security is tighter than a troll in dwarf's clothes. Corps don't put a project in a facility like this unless it has massive earning potential, and they're not going to ruin that potential by skimping on security, so expect the very latest and best that the corp has to offer. Internal Matrix systems and technology will also be top of the line. Access to the Matrix will be extremely limited due to the intervening ground or water, and this is part of the security system. A team of runners getting in and out of one of these locations is the stuff street legends are made of.

NOVA-HOT CLUB

This is where the social scene comes alive at night. Anybody who wants to be seen as a somebody is in this club tonight. There's a lineup of losers and wannabes a mile long at the door. Inside the club is filled with the Sixth World's beautiful people—people with nuyen to burn and a desire to stay current. Deals are done, stars are born, and sometimes die here. A club like this is filled with the rich and powerful that are often of great interest to runners or those that hire them. If you're lucky, you're not even here on a job and just get to enjoy yourself for the night. Either way, if you're a smooth talker and know the right people, almost any kind of good or service can be acquired, for a price. Tech and wireless in the club is top of the line, with the very best in virtual entertainment available. Security is subtle, but effective—trouble in a place like this is bad for business.

MOM-AND-POP SHOP

Big multinational megacorporations may get all the headlines, but most of the corps in the world are small "mom and pop" corps that struggle to make ends meet. People on the lower end of the economic scale often find themselves dealing with these businesses. They could be the local specialty grocer, talismonger, travel agency, or variety shop. Normally, these places aren't much interest to runners or their employers, but sometimes one of these local owners does something

extraordinary, or maybe they're just at the wrong place at the wrong time. Security in these offices is usually pretty light, with just the basics: maglocks, cameras, alarms. Sometimes there's a metahuman on site, but most of the security will be contracted. Matrix and technology is often pretty basic, unless the corp is run by some genius working on cutting-edge stuff.

NO-TELL MOTEL

You haven't lived a life in the shadows unless you've spent a night at a no-tell motel. Being the cheapest possible place to stay for a night, they appeal to those looking for a quick place to crash. They're not much to look at but at least they're functional. No-tell Motels have often crossed paths with runners, not because the motel itself is the target, but something—or more often someone—there is of value to the runners. Security at a no-tell motel is passive and fairly basic: maglocks on the rooms, some cameras, and sometimes one live staff member. In an effort to cut costs, many motels are becoming entirely automated. If there is Matrix access in the area, a motel usually has it, so runners need to be wary of jumpy residents hitting a PanicButton.

LARGE CORP OFFICE

Money is the blood of power in the Sixth World, and no one controls more of it than the big corporations. Corporate money feeds the shadows more than any other, so it is no surprise that offices and sites of the large corporations are the most common battlegrounds of the corporate shadow wars. Runners may be hired to break into an office to steal information or extract key personnel, gather intelligence, destroy something, or maybe even provide additional protection. Security forces in these offices are most often crisp, professional, and well equipped. High Threat Response and magical security forces will respond promptly to any alarms. Technical security will be sophisticated, with multiple redundant systems including maglocks (with any number of verification methods—keys, cards, biometrics), cameras, sensors, traps, and drones. Matrix security will also be solid, with all devices tied into a host that is loaded with IC and monitored by a spider. While not necessarily top-of-the-line, security is solid all around with no obvious weak point.

HOSPITAL OR CLINIC

The need for medical services in the Sixth World is higher than it has ever been. That might have something to do with the corporations running it and con-

vincing everyone to buy their insurance or get that "must-have" body modification. Whatever the reason for their widespread use, there are many reasons a run will cross into a hospital or clinic. It may be as simple as a team trying to save one of their own, or they may be coming to finish some botched wetwork. Runners could be hired to extract someone from a hospital, surreptitiously protect someone, or steal the latest medical advance. Security at medical facilities is taken seriously, but must yield to the practicality of what needs to be done. If the clinic is very private, serving only a select list of clients, then security can be tighter. If the site is a hospital that takes people off the street or emergency cases, then security can only do so much. Technology will often be top-of-the-line, often sparing little expense in providing tools for the best medical care. Due to the sensitive nature of the equipment (and the people), security will generally use non-lethal methods, and they check for weapons, suspicious implants, or unauthorized wireless signals.

HIGH-END RESIDENTIAL

While so many in the Sixth World struggle to find a decent place to live, the wealthy and powerful enjoy the high life of luxurious living. Most times this comes in the form of a luxury condo, but it can also be a traditional stand-alone home. This is the kind of home that most people can only dream of—hot in the winter, cool in the summer, with *real* food available on demand. Safety is just as much a priority for the residents as luxury, so security will not be lax. High-end residential sites are the kind of security contracts that are hotly contested, and a council of angry residents won't hesitate to switch providers, so the company will take their job very seriously. The population of high-end neighborhoods or condo buildings is generally small, so the names and faces of the residents will be well known by the security personnel on site. They will respond quickly to any alarms with a High Threat Response team, though their priority will be protecting the residents rather than directly engaging the intruders. Technical security will be solid, but not necessarily cutting edge, with most of it focused on increasing the comfort or convenience of the residents, with enough security to keep the riff-raff out.

DERELICT BUILDING

Urban decay on a large scale is a common thing in the *Shadowrun* world. This leaves a landscape littered with the bodies and bones of neighborhoods that once were, filled with buildings abandoned from their original purpose. As the squatters, gangs, and others moved in, these buildings have found new uses. These buildings will serve the purpose of whatever the new residents desire: a new home, a place for group gatherings, a social scene, a place of illegal business, somewhere to perform deeds away from prying eyes, or simply a place to hide and heal up. Most runners may not want to enter such a location but, for any number of reasons, they may find themselves having to go into one. Residents of such a place can be any number of people or things that exist on the periphery of society: squatters, gangers, Awakened predators, ghouls, or some

group that most people try to avoid like Tamanous. Security in these sites is non-existent, except for whatever the residents bring with them—there may even be holes in the walls allowing easy entrance. Technology or Matrix access is usually absent, with a few unusual exceptions, such as the building occupied by a group of technomancers. In these dark and forgotten corners of the Sixth World, there is no telling what a person may encounter.

REPUTATION

When you live on the street, with no identity in the system, your rep is all that you've got. To shadowrunners and others who exist between the cracks of society, how they are known (and who knows them) is the only piece of information that stays with them, and carries any significance. A good reputation gives a person respect and influence among their peers, allowing them to more easily acquire equipment and favors. Conversely, a bad rep can make dealing with anyone in the shadows more difficult. In *Shadowrun*, a character's reputation is broken down into three separate scores, each tracking separately: **Street Cred, Notoriety,** and **Public Awareness.**

STREET CRED

Street Cred represents a character's lifetime accomplishments. The more they've done and accomplished, the more respected they'll be by their peers. A character's Street Cred score is based on the character's total Karma earned. For every full 10 Karma that a character earns, they gain a point of Street Cred. Thus, Street Cred equals the character's total Karma, divided by 10, always rounded down (though other factors may adjust it, such as sacrificing Street Cred to reduce Notoriety. At the gamemaster's discretion, additional Street Cred points can be awarded for particularly noteworthy accomplishments. Street Cred is applied as a positive Limit Modifier to all Social Tests in situations where the character's reputation would be known.

NOTORIETY

Notoriety represents the negative side of the character's reputation. If they are difficult to work with, stubborn, unskilled, fatally flawed, or prone to failure, word is going to get around about them. Notoriety can also reflect callousness, untrustworthiness, and any evil aspects to a character's personality that might spur others to steer clear of her. Each character starts off with a Notoriety of 0. Modify this according to the following qualities possessed by the character (plus one point per negative quality, minus one point per positive quality):

Positive Qualities: Blandness, First Impression, Lucky

Negative Qualities: Addiction, Bad Luck, Combat Paralysis, Elf Poser, Gremlins, Incompetent (any skill), Ork Poser, Scorched, SINner (criminal SIN only), Spirit Bane, Uncouth, Uneducated, Weak Immune System

During play, a gamemaster may award a point of Notoriety for actions that would be a stain on the character's reputation in the shadow community. Some examples include:

- Refusing to finish a run
- Insulting or otherwise pissing off a Mr. Johnson
- Incredibly obnoxious or callous behavior
- Betraying team members
- Killing innocents
- Earning a powerful enemy
- Knowingly working for a dragon
- Exceptional bad luck that leads to disaster

Characters cannot earn a Notoriety point for something for which they have already received a point. Notoriety points exist as a consequence for unrealistic amoral behavior, including frivolous killing streaks by player characters. High Notoriety characters are likely to find working in the shadows increasingly difficult as contacts and others become less willing to help them.

A character can reduce their Notoriety by permanently sacrificing 2 points of Street Cred for every 1 point of Notoriety.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

Public Awareness represents how well the character is known among the media, authorities, and public at large. With only a few exceptions, shadowrunners are always working to ensure that the public doesn't know anything about who they are or what they have done. Corporations and other power groups hire runners when they want something taken care of quietly without a great deal of public attention drawn to it. So if a runner is doing their job, the public should never know about them. The best shadowrunner is one that Joe Wageslave has never heard of. Only when something goes wrong, or the situation is unavoidable, do the actions of a runner become public.

In much the same way as Notoriety, the gamemaster determines when the actions of a runner should be awarded a point of Public Awareness. Some examples include:

- Fighting with law enforcement or some other High Threat Response team
- Extracting a well-known person
- Blowing something up in a populated area
- Leaving significant physical evidence
- Being seen by many eyewitnesses
- Broadcasting or posting videos of your crimes on your Matrix fansite

How well the public actually knows a runner is determined by the level of their Public Awareness. Wheth-

er an individual person knows a runner can be determined using the Public Awareness Level Table below.

PUBLIC AWARENESS TABLE

RATING	AWARENESS
0–3	Unheard of outside the shadow community
4–6	Known to those who watch the shadows—conspiracy theorists, specialty law enforcement
7–9	Known by those in the know, investigative journalists, law enforcement, some government officials
10+	Household name, sim and trid stars portray the character in movies

LIFESTYLES

At the end of the night, every runner has to have a place to come home to. That place where they hang up their SMG, spells, deck, or drone. A character must select one of the lifestyles below to be their primary Lifestyle—this represents the general affluence of their day-to-day life. They may elect to pay other lifestyle costs as well to represent maintaining separate residences for alternate identity or "safehouse" purposes but must pay full cost on all lifestyles they maintain.

LUXURY

This lifestyle offers the best of everything: ritzy digs, lots of high-tech toys, the best food and drink, you name it. The character has a household staff, maid service, or sophisticated drones to do the chores. She gets by in her massive mansion, snazzy condo, or the penthouse suite in a top hotel. Home security is top-of-the-line, with well-trained guards, astral security, and quick response times. Her home entertainment system is better than that in public theaters and accessible from anywhere in the home. She's on the VIP list at several exclusive restaurants and clubs, both real and virtual. This is the life for the high-stakes winners in the world of *Shadowrun:* high-level executives, government big shots, Yakuza bigwigs, and the few shadowrunners who pull off the big scores (and live to spend their pay).

Cost: 100,000 nuyen a month and up!

HIGH

A High lifestyle offers a roomy house or condo, good food, and the technology that makes life easy. The character may not have the same perks as the really big boys, but neither does she have as many people gunning for her. Her home is in a secure zone or protected by good, solid bribes to the local police contractor and gang boss. She has a housekeeping service or enough tech to take care of most chores. This is the life for the well-to-do on either side of the law: mid-level managers, senior Mob bosses, and the like.

Cost: 10,000 nuyen a month

MIDDLE

The Middle lifestyle offers a nice house or condo with lots of comforts. Characters with this lifestyle sometimes eat nutrisoy as well as higher-priced natural food, but at least the autocook has a full suite of flavor faucets. This is the lifestyle of ordinary wage-earners or reasonably successful criminals.

Cost: 5,000 nuyen a month

LOW

With this lifestyle, the character has an apartment, and nobody is likely to bother her much as long as she keeps the door bolted. She can count on regular meals; the nutrisoy may not taste great, but at least it's hot. Power and water are available during assigned rationing periods. Security depends on how regular the payments to the local street gang are. Factory workers, petty crooks, and other folks stuck in a rut, just starting out, or down on their luck tend to have Low lifestyles.

Cost: 2,000 nuyen a month

SQUATTER

Life stinks for the squatter, and most of the time so does the character. She eats low-grade nutrisoy and yeast, adding flavors with an eyedropper. Her home is a squatted building, perhaps fixed up a bit, possibly even converted into barracks or divided into closet-sized rooms and shared with other squatters. Or maybe she just rents a coffin-sized sleep tank by the night. The only thing worse than the Squatter lifestyle is living on the streets.

Cost: 500 nuyen a month

STREETS

The character lives on the streets—or in the sewers, steam tunnels, condemned buildings, or whatever temporary flop she can get. Food is wherever the character finds it, bathing is a thing of the past, and the character's only security is what she creates for herself. This lifestyle is the bottom of the ladder, inhabited by down-and-outers of all stripes.

Cost: Hey pal, life ain't all bad. It's free.

HOSPITALIZED

This special lifestyle applies only when a character is sick or injured. The character is confined to a hospital: a real

one, a clinic equipped as a hospital, or a private location with the necessary equipment. Characters cannot own this lifestyle. They only pay for it until they get well or go broke, whichever comes first.

Cost: 500 nuyen a day for basic care, 1,000 nuyen a day for intensive care.

LIFESTYLE OPTIONS

Not every location is exactly the same. One may have a distinct advantage or disadvantage over another; it's all about the location. The following options can be selected for any of the lifestyles except Streets or Hospitalized. The gamemaster may disallow any of these options if they wouldn't be plausible for the character's described residence, or if there is no chance of the bonus or penalty listed ever coming into play.

SPECIAL WORK AREA

The place has a workshop, garage, office, studio, or other kind of large area that can hold a specialized work space of some kind. Specialized equipment can be set up "just the way you like it" so tasks can be accomplished quickly and easily. Skill checks relevant to the setting have their Limit increased by 2 when performed in this space.

Cost: +1,000 nuyen a month

EXTRA SECURE

Security where you live is particularly tight. The neighborhood may be surrounded by a wall, guarded by vigilant security contractors, patrolled by an altruistic gang, or near some particularly powerful individual that no one wants to mess with. Whatever the case, the security of the living space is above average for the area. All High Threat Response (see p. 356) and other security response rolls are made at one level better than the area would normally be.

Cost: +20 percent of the lifestyle

OBSCURE/DIFFICULT TO FIND

You live where? The corner of what and what? Your place is particularly difficult to find or in an obscure, not-well-known area of the city. Everyone needs directions, or a good map, to find your place and even then they often get lost. You've given up on the pizza delivery guy, you just meet him at the nearest intersection. Any Sneaking Skill checks (owner of the property excluded) made in the vicinity of the residence are made with a -2 penalty.

Cost: +10 percent of the lifestyle

CRAMPED

It's not small, it's just cozy—or at least that's what the landlord said. There is *just* enough space in your place to live, and not do a whole lot else. Forget doing any hobbies or work, or even stretching your legs when you sit down—there just isn't the room. Any Skill checks tied to Logic have their Limit reduced by 2 (to a minimum of 1) when performed in this space.

Cost: -10 percent of the lifestyle

DANGEROUS AREA

Isn't that where a guy got shot yesterday? The area you live in is particularly dangerous and prone to crime, including violence. Security and law enforcement are overwhelmed in the area, so will only respond to the most desperate need and will often be slower to respond. People in the area generally look out for themselves. Hey, at least your rent is cheaper, just don't keep any fancy stuff in your place. Any High Threat Response (see p. 356) or other similar security response rolls are made as if this area were one level lower than it actually is.

Cost: -20 percent of lifestyle

PAYING THE BILLS

Obviously, a character has to pay the cost of their lifestyle(s) each month. Prepayments can be made for any number of months, but landlords are highly unlikely to refund the money later.

If a payment is missed there is a chance that the character will end up losing the lifestyle. Each time a payment is missed, roll 1 die. If the result is *greater* than the number of consecutive months of payments missed, then the landlord has let them slide, for now. Payments must still be made up later, however. If the die result is *less than or equal to* the number of months missed, the character is out the door. If this is not the primary lifestyle, then the unit is lost. If the character missed payments on their primary lifestyle, downgrade the lifestyle one level. This represents the character having some items repossessed, seized, and/or sold in order to forcibly pay debts, and they are evicted from wherever they are living. At the gamemaster's discretion, the character may also still owe some of the back rent to some kind of creditor. This may be a legit bank or loan company, or someone more unscrupulous such as a loan shark or criminal syndicate.

Overall, dealing with the character's lifestyle is more of a roleplaying opportunity than anything else. Gamemasters and players are encouraged to make an interesting and dramatic story out of the situation.

BUYING A LIFESTYLE

A character can permanently buy a given lifestyle by making a payment equal to 100 months' upkeep. For example, ten million nuyen buys a permanent life of luxury. This sum represents investments, trust funds, and so on that take care of payments.

Nothing in life is certain, however. A character can lose a permanent lifestyle through an enemy's action or

through sheer bad luck. A hacker can rip investments to shreds, or enemies can blow real estate holdings into scrap. These things depend on how the character's story unfolds, not on how much is her bank account at the time. If a player wishes, her character can sell a permanent lifestyle of Middle or better. If the character has a couple of months to broker a legitimate deal, roll 2D6. Multiply the result by 10 percent to determine what percent of the purchase price the character gets paid for her various holdings. If the character doesn't have the SINner quality (see p. 84), roll only 1D6. Also roll 1D6 if the character must dump her home and possessions fast or through an agent because she is on the run.

TEAM LIFESTYLES

If a team is particularly tight-knit and lives together (or if a few members of a team want to shack up), they can buy a joint team lifestyle. The cost is an extra ten percent per additional person. If the team is purchasing a Low Lifestyle or higher, one member of the team has to be the tenant of record. This is the one stuck with the debt if the team doesn't keep up payments.

RUN REWARDS

After a run is completed it's time to calculate and hand out the rewards to the players in the form of Karma and cash (or any kind of material reward). Karma and cash rewards are given to each player that participated. Generally the cash reward portion is negotiated at the beginning of the adventure—often in a classic "meet Mr. Johnson" scene—while Karma rewards are given after the adventure.

Gamemasters have the freedom to set up pay as they see fit, but these optional guidelines can help make that task easier while also building consistency from game to game. Note also that rewards may be supplemented by bonus equipment allowances as the gamemaster sees fit.

CASH

It's all about the nuyen isn't it? All your problems will go away if you could just get a little bit more. What you score on a run isn't enough, but maybe it will help. The Run Payment table below outlines a recommended amount to be awarded to **each player** to perform a run.

To calculate the payment for a run, start with the **base cost** of 3,000 nuyen. The base cost represents the starting point for employing a runner. This rate may be increased by 100 nuyen per net hit on a Negotiation Test at the start of the run.

Once you know the base cost, calculate the multiplier. The first part of the multiplier is the **highest opposing dice pool** of the opposition, divided by 4 (rounded down). This is the total Skill + Attribute of any NPC that will be **directly** opposing the players in a meaningful way. The dice pool has to be for an Active Skill, not a Knowledge Skill, and it needs to be a skill that was used against the players. For example, if the highest opposing dice pool is 12 (Hacking 6 + Logic 6) from an ace decker looking for the same paydata as the players, they should only count that pool if they hack against the decker. If instead they only encounter the decker in a gunfight and he (for some reason) doesn't break out his hacking skills during the fight, they cannot count his Hacking dice pool as the highest opposing dice pool they faced. The value should be calculated using any permanent enhancements that the NPC has to the skill or attribute (such as cyberware or magic) but should not include any equipment bonuses, or conditional or situational modifiers. Divide the total dice pool by 4 and you have the first part of the multiplier.

After that, add other values to the multiplier based on the danger of the mission including both modifiers in the table on p. 376 and modifiers developed by the gamemaster. Once all appropriate values are added, multiply it by the base cost.

Once you have applied the multiplier, one of three **cost modifiers** should be applied. These modify the amount of nuyen given for a run based on the nature of the work. Standard run is what most of the shadowruns in 2075 will be—they're the kind of extraction, espionage, or expropriation that happens all the time. There are, however, certain kinds of jobs that many runners tend to shy away from; runs that have an even more questionable moral dilemma than normal. These can include assassination (of a relatively innocent person), helping corporations exploit people for profit, illegal drug running, slavery, or any number of things that even runners find deplorable. Payment for these kinds of runs tend to be higher since many runners won't take the job (and if you do it, don't expect anyone to like you afterward). On the other hand, there are runs that leave you with warm fuzzies on the inside when you're done. The kind of runs that even your mom would be proud of you for doing. These include hooding (or doing something for no payment at all), helping out the downtrodden, and generally sticking it to the man and helping out the little guy. These runs generally pay less, but hey, happiness is its own reward right?

SAMPLE RUN COST CALCULATIONS

If runners are sent to steal a sword belonging to a Halloweeners gang member, the base cost is 3,000 nuyen. This is then multiplied by the highest opposing dice pool, which would be either the Pistols pool 6 or, if the gang attempted to use their Street specialization in Etiquette as part of the mission, 7. Either way, the multiplier rounds down to 1. With no other factors coming into play, this makes the pay 3,000 nuyen per runner. If the runners fought the gangers and were outnumbered

CASH REWARDS

BASE COST	3,000¥
SITUATION	**MODIFIERS**
Highest opposing Dice Pool	+ (Dice Pool / 4)
Runners were outnumbered three to one in a combat situation	+1
Runners were outnumbered two to one in a combat situation by NPCs with Professional Rating 4 or higher (not cumulative with modifier listed above)	+1
Runners faced a pack of at least six critters	+1
Runners encountered at least three different spirits (besides watchers) in a single encounter	+1
Runners accomplished the task with impressive speed and/or subtlety	+1
Runners risked public exposure or a raised profile as a natural part of the run*	+1
Job brings runners into direct contact with a notably dangerous part or element of Sixth World lore (the Red Samurai, a Mitsuhama Zero Zone, etc.)	+1
COST MODIFIERS	
Standard run	0%
(nothing special, normal work for a runner)	
Run will make you a cold-hearted bastard	+10-20%
(wetwork, helping corps oppress people, drug running, human trafficking)	
Run has good feelings as part of its reward	–10-20%
(hooding, helping the little guy, taking some "dys" out of "dystopia")	

three to one, the multiplier becomes 2, giving the runners 6,000 nuyen apiece.

Now let's say the sword belongs to a Halloweener lieutenant instead, and he gets a chance to use his Browning Ultra-Power in combat. This has a dice pool of 8, making for a multiplier of 2. The base cost for this mission is 6,000 nuyen; the multiplier jumps to 3 if the runners are outnumbered three-to-one, making base pay 9,000 nuyen apiece.

The runners may instead be stealing the sword from the Mafia. The highest dice pool is 10 for a regular grunt, but 13 for a lieutenant, meaning that absent any other factors base pay will start at 6,000 per person, 9,000 if they go up against a lieutenant. That lower number will jump to 9,000 if they are outnumbered two-to-one by the Mafiosi at any point, due to the fact that they have a Professional Rating of 4. If the job involves killing one of the Mafia goons, then 10 percent could be added to cost, making it 9,900 nuyen, which could be rounded to an even 10,000. If it involves taking from the Mafia to give some resources to some poor neighborhood residents the criminals have been exploiting, the cost would drop by 10 percent, down to 8,100.

What about a really big payday? What if the runners are foolish enough to accept a job that sends them into the teeth of a Sioux Wildcats lieutenant? The highest opposing dice pool is 18, making the multiplier start at 4. This is definitely a notably dangerous element of the Sixth World, so the multiplier jumps by 1 to 5. The lieutenant is not likely to be alone, so the multiplier will probably climb to 6 thanks to the runners being outnumbered two-to-one by enemy soldiers. The Wildcats stand a good chance of having some critters at their beck and call, adding one more to the multiplier, which now stands at 7. This means the base price for this very dangerous job is 21,000 nuyen per runner. They'll have plenty of cash to spend—if they survive.

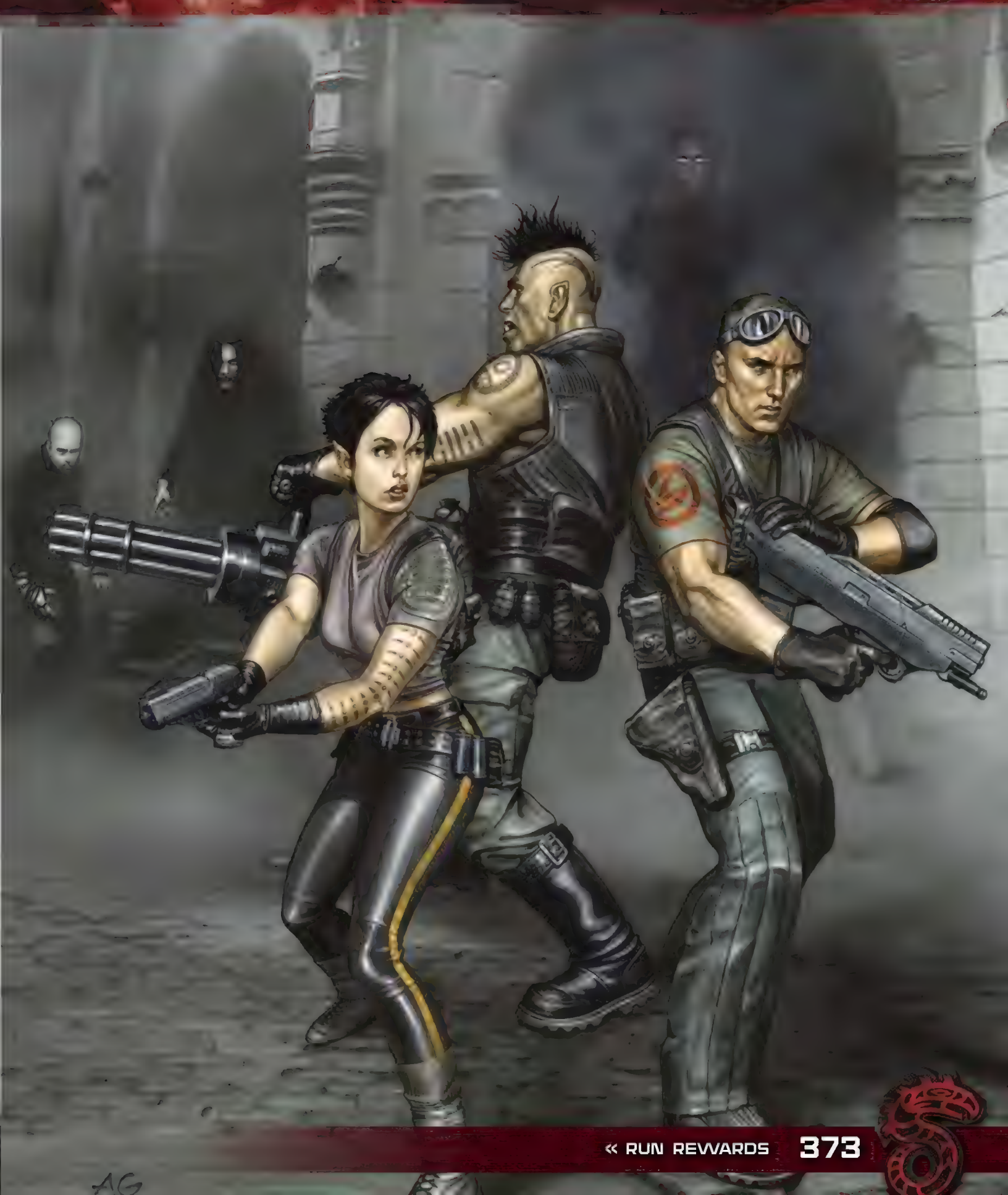
KARMA

Cash may get you fancy gear, but it's experience that really wins the day on the street. The other half of a run's reward comes in the form of **Karma**. Karma is a representation of all the intangibles gained in life on the streets: experience, intuition, and sometimes luck. Karma is awarded to **each player** after a run has been completed (for better or worse) by consulting the following table. Some Karma comes from contributing to group objectives.

Add up the values for all the appropriate situations in the Karma Rewards table, then apply one of the Karma Modifiers from the bottom of the table. These are the same modifiers used to adjust the cash payment for the run from the Cash Rewards table. If one modifier was used for the Cash Rewards, the same modifier should be used for the Karma rewards.

KARMA REWARDS

SITUATION	KARMA
Character survived	1
Group complete all objectives	2
Group completed some objectives	1
Overall adventure challege	(Highest opposed Dice Pool / 6 (round down)
KARMA MODIFIERS	
Standard run	0
Cold-hearted bastard run	-2
Good feelings run	+2



ALL THE ANGLES

The ork who called himself "Tusk" had finished his food hours before his other dinner guests arrived. He appreciated food a great deal, but knew never to mix fine dining with business. What was about to happen was definitely business. Just as this clock in his AR display flicked to 10:04 p.m., he received a call from the manager of the restaurant.

"Pardon the interruption sir, but there are some ... people here that are asking for admittance. They claim they are guests of yours." The patrician distaste in the manager's voice clearly showed that the runners had not come appropriately dressed as Tusk had instructed.

Tusk used his most soothing tone to placate the distressed manager, "Yes, I was expecting guests. I apologize for their appearance. Please escort them, quietly, to my room."

When the runners arrived in the back private room where Tusk was waiting, he was not impressed. They were a typical foursome, with threadbare clothing and visible cuts and bruises. Despite the team's rough and unimpressive appearance, Tusk trusted his contact enough to know that he would put together an effective team.

The meeting passed in a blur. He had done this kind of thing so many times before that the routine had become not worth remembering, really. They haggled over payment, conditions, and information. In the end, Tusk was happy with the result. In the matters of cash, he ended up giving fifteen percent less than his authorized maximum, which could provide him a nice bonus. He also didn't give up any information he wasn't anxious to share, particularly the bit about the target being recently acquired by Aztechnology. Far too many runners developed an unfortunate case of the jitters going against the Big A, so sometimes it was best not to give them information that could set their imaginations in motion.

He had to pay a bit of extra attention when he was forced into a bit of improvisation at the end if the meet.

"And you will take delivery of the package?" The team's face asked.

Tusk paused momentarily—hopefully not noticeably—before he replied, "No, delivery will be made to an associate of mine. Contact this number when you are ready to make delivery."

Just after the runner team left, he brought up a list of contacts on his AR display and found an appropriate name. Yes, he would hire a third party to take delivery. Although it wasn't part of the original plan, he was feeling better about the snap decision by the minute. It always pays to be cautious.

Leon Adler was a giant squid floating in the deep waters of the ocean. A squid with its many limbs reaching out to

BY MARK DYNNA

manipulate control consoles made of coral, datalines made of seaweed, icons that looked like sea horses or krill. He manipulated all these devices with dexterity and fine control that would be impossible if he were an actual squid made of flesh and blood. But Leon the squid was made of photons and data, simulated brain impulses—a virtual representation. He chose the ocean iconography because it soothed him, easing the nerves and stress that came with the job of managing the electronic operations and security of a corporation. His job had been particularly stressful since the takeover. In truth, *everyone's* job had become more stressful, and everyone was taking things out on him. At least that's how it felt. So Leon allowed more than his normal suspension of disbelief as he observed his underwater surroundings. He let himself almost believe it was real. It's what he needed to get through his day.

He began his routine status check.

Data services—functioning.

Communications network—transmitting.

Door entry authorization systems—engaged.

Internal and external sensors—sweeping.

Employee RFID location system—tracking.

Cameras—recor ... wait.

Something was odd. Feed NW-6-C showed Isa Porter in the employee lounge. But the RFID system reported that the tag implanted in Isa Porter was in her office, nowhere near the employee lounge. There shouldn't be *anyone* in the lounge at this time of night. It didn't make any sense. He began to run a deeper system analysis on the camera feed while calling up a Probe IC that looked like a lantern fish to sweep the system for any more anomalies. Was this a system malfunction? It seems to have failed in a very specific way. If the camera had just locked up, would it be frozen, on one frame? The camera feed clearly wasn't frozen as he could see Isa moving, if only slightly. He peered closer at the image and noticed a subtle skip in the image. Wait a minute, thought Leon, it looks like the image has been looped.

His concentration was suddenly broken by a signal from the lantern fish. It was reporting that it may have found ...

The IC exploded in a violent flash of electronic light. An icon, a persona of unknown origin, exploded from a hiding place before Leon even realized what was going on. It moved so *fast!* What is that? He was under attack! Oh ghost, someone was in the system! Where did it go? He couldn't see the intruder anymore. It was so *fast!* What should he do? He couldn't think. What should he *do*?

Tell Security. Security had to know. He shifted his virtual squid form to the coral and seaweed that made up the communications system. Dead. Shattered and non-functional. When did that happen? Didn't he just check that system a

few seconds ago? The intruder, he was so *fast*. He was in front of him. He moved so *fast!*

There was white fire, and something like a vice on his head, a thousand bricks pressing on his skull, crushing his brain! What is that, how is he doing that? The white fire. Crushing. The ocean, thousands and thousands of pound of pressure. The weight of the water. It pressed down, crushing him. White fire. His head felt like it was about to cave in. He had to get out, get somewhere safe, out of the ocean, out of the Matrix, but he couldn't. He felt like he was dying. He could think about nothing besides jacking out. Jack. Out. Jack. Out. It was all he could think. Raise his arm. The cord. The cord in his head. Where the fire was. Needed to get the fire out of his head! Get the plug! Jack out. Jack out, jackout, jackout, jackout jackout, jackoutjackoutjackoutjackoutjackout.

The world spun, fell, and stopped with a crash and a thud.

Buddy Ehrlich sipped the industrial byproduct that they called soykaf and coughed. "Fragging drek isn't fit for any fragging body to drink." He tossed the cup away in disgust, then motioned for his men to follow him with a terse gesture. He stopped in front of door 35-Charlie. It was locked. Wasn't this damn thing supposed to unlock when he walked up to it? Wasn't that the whole fragging point of this whole piece of shit system? He tried his code on the panel. Nothing.

"For shit's sake what the frag is going on?!" Buddy was in no mood for this. He pulled up his AR display and tried to call that little shit Leon. He better fix these doors right fragging now. Nothing. In fact, the whole security net wasn't transmitting anything anymore. Buddy was no drek-head. He knew what this meant.

"Weapons out and stay sharp! Something's seriously fragging wrong," Buddy snapped the order to his team and they obeyed. He drew his own pistol and headed down the hallway to a door he knew hadn't received the upgrades yet. It was the only way he'd be able to get anywhere. When they rounded the next corner he saw them, a whole fragging group of them. One of them was a big fragging troll, gun ready to fire. Then, in less than a blink, it did, and bullets were flying. Coleman, Lester, and Garrison went down in seconds before Buddy could bellow, "Find cover!"

He fired off a couple of shots as he dove behind a nearby doorway. He heard the constant clatter of bullets—they must have automatic weapons. One of them had a sword and was cheerfully charging through the hail of gunfire to swing it at a target. Buddy fired off a couple more shots just to keep their heads down while he assessed the situation. He hoped they were as surprised to see him as he was to see them. He just needed to hold them down for a little until backup arrived, though it would be easier if his fragging commlink was working.

One of the intruders leaned out of a side hallway and made a strange motion with his arm. The world exploded into color, sound, and utter confusion. Buddy couldn't tell which way he was facing or what he was doing. The world was a jumble of images and sounds like someone had turned on a dozen fragging trid stations at once and beamed them directly into his brain. The realization of what he saw finally came to him.

"Fall back, they've got a fragging mage!" he shouted while moving back, and his troops did likewise. As they rounded the corner, his head started to clear. Then he heard a cry followed by a sickening wet crunch. He turned to see Scherr drop to the ground spouting blood from a gaping would. It was the guy with the fragging sword! Who uses a fragging sword? Buddy raised his pistol and fired, but the guy was already gone. Frag he was *fast!* A blur at the edge of his vision had Buddy pick up the intruder again. Over there now.

"Full auto, wide spread!" he barked and, his men responded promptly by hosing the area with a shower of bullets. The fragger with the sword twisted and turned around the bullets like nothing Buddy had ever seen, but he withdrew. Just as Buddy was feeling good about this, he heard heavy footfalls behind him. He turned just in time to see the troll—where the frag did *he* come from?—put a shotgun blast into Stahl's stomach and send him flying backwards. Without any further instruction, his remaining men started firing madly into this new hulking form. The bullets seemed to bounce harmlessly off his thick hide.

Time to get the frag out of here, thought Buddy. He turned to come face to face with the guy with the sword.

Oh frag, he thought.

Dr. Holmsten looked up and froze. There were three men standing at the back of the lab. They hadn't been there before, had they? One of them wasn't even a *man*, it was one of those ugly horned *things*. A troll. They were intruders. They had gotten past Buddy and the locks and everything. What were they going to do? Without a word they moved toward Dr. Holmsten. One of them jammed something into his back and he fell limp, unconscious. The troll grabbed him before he could fall, hoisted him over his shoulder, and all of them walked out.

Nuri Marshall frowned as he read the report on last night's incident. He had just taken over the head of the Security Division last week after Aztechnology purchased a controlling share of the upstart business. He had expected some sort of move—he would have wagered good money that it would happen—but he did not expect it to come this soon. Still, he had to grudgingly admit that Aztechnology's competitors were capable and resourceful. The team that made their intrusion last night was certainly more than up to the task. All data on the project had been taken, along with Dr. Holmsten, the brilliant mind behind the project. Without the project there would be nothing to bring to market, no profit to be made, and the entire acquisition would be a massive loss.

Nuri couldn't let that happen—not if he wanted to get out of this with his health and job intact. But he had anticipated this possibility, and he had a plan for it.

First he checked the doctor's personnel file. Yes, his "medical screening" had been completed. He sent a specially coded request off to the Metaphysical Services division for the sample to be used to track the doctor's current location. Then he made a second special call, this one to a man that he didn't even have a name for.

The man didn't speak; he was content to radiate an intimidating silence. There were few things in the world that unnerved Nuri like this man, so he kept the conversation brief. "The package has been taken. I need you to retrieve it. I'll send the location to you in a few hours. Be ready to move."

That was all. Nuri had used all the resources at his disposal. All he could do now was wait.

Lobo crouched in the shadows and peered into the night. His cybernetic eyes easily cut through the darkness and distance that separated his position from his target. The runners were approaching the man who was going to receive their package, which included the man and the data. He and his counterpart, Ocelotl, were here to intercept that delivery and return both to their rightful owners—or destroy them if that was not possible. Lobo deftly slide his weapon into a ready position, knowing without having to look that Ocelotl was also preparing. They always worked in a pair; always two and no one else. That was how they had been trained, that was how they had lived as far as Lobo could remember. Perhaps there was a time that he had lived before the company had taken him, before the company had made—remade—him into the lethal killing machine that he was today. He could no longer remember. He could no longer remember anything prior to awakening in the hospital after the final procedure, after the reconstruction of his body was complete. Armed and augmented with the very best technology that Aztechnology possessed, he was a warrior without peer. Faster, tougher, and stronger than any of the street urchin he now regarded through is augmented vision. Where Lobo was cybernetically and biologically enhanced, Ocelotl was magically charged. Instructed and inducted deeply in the magical arts known to the peerless Aztechnology magicians, Ocelotl seethed with magical potential yet shielded himself in such a way as to appear mundane. He could just as easily smash a foe apart with his fists as immolate them with a look and a gesture. Together they were steel and sorcery, magic and might.

The time had come. As the runners handed over the doctor and data—Lobo tracked the data transfer in his AR display—to the delivery man, Lobo and Ocelotl rose as one. Silently and quickly they covered the intervening distance to the two parties, then struck with vicious abandon. They executed the attack plan exactly as they had discussed, knowing exactly what the other would do, how and where they would move. Such was their bond and understanding of one another that their coordinated actions bordered on prescience. Initially Ocelotl unleashed a blast of magic that physically separated the two parties, blowing both in opposite directions. Before their bodies had hit the ground, Lobo put short controlled bursts of fire into the bodyguards of the delivery man. They were dead before they landed. Engaging his virtual tools with the same superhuman speeds, Lobo launched an overwhelming assault on the commlink of the deliveryman. Its virtual defenses were shattered and the information removed from it in seconds. This was immediately followed by Lobo putting a trio of bullets into the man's head, which exploded in a geyser of bloody pulp. Oceltol hurled spells to confuse and disorient the runners, keeping them from interfering. When the electronic assault was done, Lobo moved to engage the runners with his submachine gun while Oceltol disabled the personnel portion of the package with a non-lethal magic bolt. Lobo moved quickly to pick up the comatose body, then withdrew as Ocelotl veiled their escape with yet another spell. The total time of engagement from beginning to end was less than thirty seconds—exactly as planned. Operation successful.

Sometime later, the ork was back in the executive's office ready to deliver a message of mixed good news.

"I thought the operation was a *failure*," the executive scowled, with particular emphasis on that last word.

The ork would not be goaded. "Not entirely. Although we did not receive delivery of the doctor, I was able to salvage the data."

"How? I was told it was lost as well."

"Ah, but that is why it always pays to have a contingency plan! I knew the particular bagman I hired had a fallback for just such an occasion. It simply took me some time to locate his body in the appropriate morgue, since he had no identification and there are so many anonymous dead in this city every day." He paused to take a sip of his drink. "Once located I had one of our surgeons remove the implanted data lock from the man's brain, where I hoped he would have stored the information. I wasn't sure if he had time to make a copy before he was killed, but fortunately for us, he did."

With that the ork transmitted the data package to the executive with a smug smile that showed his tusks. He did it just to piss the executive off.

After briefly examining the data, the executive replied, "And what of your hires? The runners that initially retrieved the information for you, what happened to them?"

"I have no idea."

"You don't even know if they're dead or alive?"

"Not in the slightest, nor do I care."

"How can you not care?" The ork's callousness was a curiosity to the executive.

"Because, my dear friend, there are far more important things going on in this world than the fate of one team of shadowrunners."

HELPS AND HINDRANCES

Let's face it, chummers: It's a big, mean Sixth World out there, and your characters aren't in it by themselves. There are all sorts of other people and things out there that, sooner or later, they're going to have to deal with. Some of them will be friendly and try to help your character out when he's in a tight spot; others will try to shoot your character in the face, or eat him, or otherwise get in the way of his success.

This chapter will show you a few things on each side. It's divided into three sections. The first deals with non-player characters (NPCs), the people your player characters (PCs) will interact with through the course of the game. The second deals with critters, both normal and paranormal, that might be encountered along the way, for better or for worse. Usually worse. The third section deals with drugs and other toxins which can be used both professionally and recreationally.

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

If the player characters are the stars of their own drama, non-player characters (NPCs) are their supporting cast. From the megacorporate CEO to the dwarf squatter living in a box in an alley, from the dragon in the boardroom to the clerk at the Stuffer Shack, NPCs are the people filling the PCs' world, the people they talk to, fight with, and otherwise encounter. They walk the same streets, stab the same backs, and sell the same secrets as the PCs. They're how the gamemaster interacts with the players to tell the story.

Shadowrun is a role-playing game, and by its nature is interactive. Dealings between PCs and NPCs will, for the most part, rely upon the role-playing of the players and the gamemaster. There will be times, though, when role-playing isn't going to be enough. Sometimes, talking doesn't get the job done, and things get messy. At times like that, just knowing the character's motivation and attitude aren't enough; you need to know what they can do.

Typically, the gamemaster will customize NPCs for the adventure or campaign they're running. They fill a lot of different roles, after all, and each campaign has a different tone and feel. The NPCs should provide some challenge to the PCs, or be of enough assistance to them, and the gamemaster should keep this in mind as he puts them together. Even if their life circumstances aren't comfortable, they should fit comfortably into the story that's being told.

While he should customize the NPCs, it's often helpful for the gamemaster to have something to start with. Players are unpredictable, and the gamemaster might not have anticipated the tangent they've taken. This section provides some basic NPCs that the gamemaster can use. It also has advice and guidelines on how to run NPCs in different ways. They can be grunts or prime runners, faceless opposition or major characters who will have a significant impact on the lives of the PCs. Or they could be something in between, or neither. They might be people the PCs know, contacts who help and guide them—for a price. While most NPCs will fit into these categories, not all of them will, and the gamemaster shouldn't feel obligated to force the issue. Some NPCs are vital to the story; others are merely set decoration.

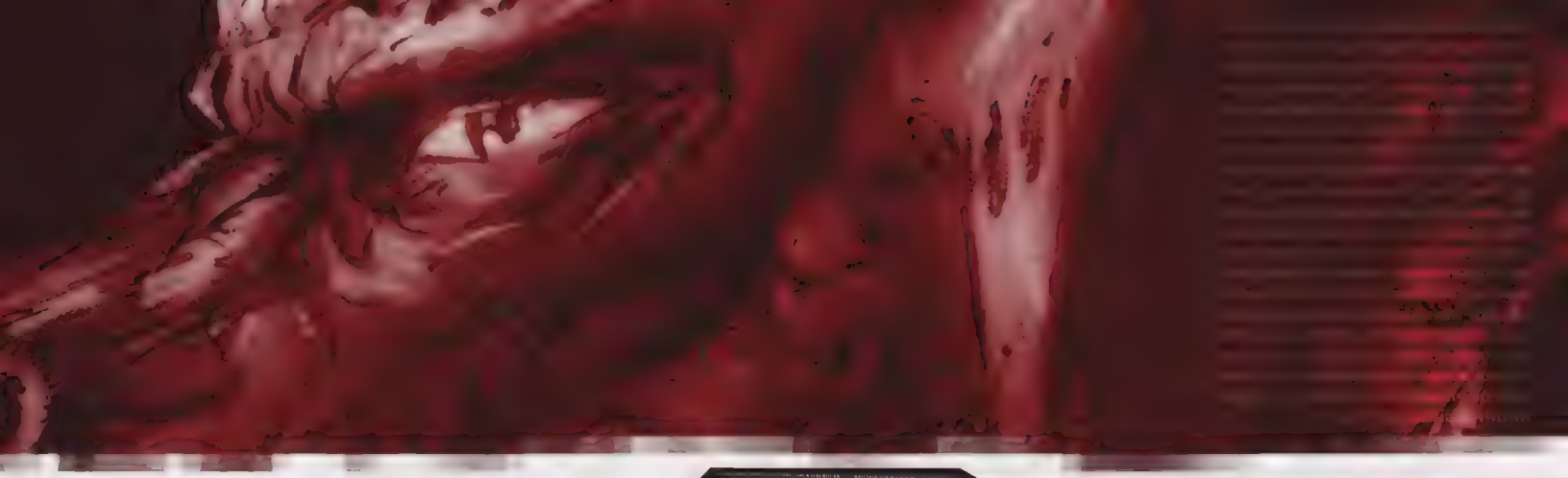
GRUNTS

Sooner or later in every story in the Sixth World, the protagonists will meet up with a group of antagonists. These can range from a go-gang to an elite corporate security squad. The power level doesn't really matter; they're nameless and faceless, and they all have basically the same abilities. They might be next to useless or they might be extraordinarily dangerous, but they're still interchangeable henchmen and minions.

They're **grunts.**

Grunts are NPCs that can be grouped together because they have virtually identical game statistics. They're most easily handled by the gamemaster in groups, with one set of attributes and skills for everybody. Different groups of similar grunts might have different specializations added to some of their basic skills.

They likewise all have similar equipment and weapons, though there might occasionally be a surprise in the group. One of the gangers might be a street witch, or one of the security guards might be toting an assault rifle when the rest are armed with pistols. The gamemaster should make a note of these special cases, and make sure that they give the specialist the appropriate skill to



make the proper use of his exceptional gear or ability. Specialist grunts are good for keeping the players and their characters honest and off their guard; it's easy to fall into the trap of thinking all grunts are identical. Don't go too far, though; you should limit such specialists to one or two per group of grunts. This helps make bookkeeping easier.

Another way to make bookkeeping easier for the gamemaster is to streamline Initiative in combat by making a single Initiative Test for the entire group of grunts, although augmented specialists can make one of their own if the gamemaster so chooses. The result of this test applies to all the grunts, though some modifiers, specifically injury modifiers, might cause some of the grunts to act on a different Initiative Score than the rest of their team.

NPC AND CRITTER STATS

ABBREVIATION	ATTRIBUTE	ABBREVIATION	ATTRIBUTE
B	Body	A	Agility
R	Reaction	S	Strength
W	Willpower	L	Logic
I	Intuition	C	Charisma
E	Edge	Ess	Essence
M	Magic	Res	Resonance
Init	Initiative		

MOWING THEM DOWN

Sometimes, even the reduced paperwork of using grunts is too much to keep track of. For situations like that, here are some optional rules to help speed things up even more:

- A single wound takes a grunt down.
- Normal resistance rules don't apply to grunts; all rolls made against them are unopposed. Most spells go off unhindered, and grunts do not roll to dodge ranged attacks.
- If a PC makes any hits on a Sneaking Test, grunts are automatically surprised.
- If they see the shadowrunners coming, grunts may attempt to ambush them, but the ambush automatically fails.

CONDITION MONITORS

Grunts are easier for the gamemaster to manage than other NPCs (and they're easier for the PCs to mow down). Grunts have only one Condition Monitor, which is used to track both Physical and Stun damage. This Condition Monitor has boxes equal to 8 plus half of either Body or Willpower (whichever is higher), rounded up. All damage taken by a grunt, whether it's Physical or Stun, is tracked on this one Condition Monitor; when it's full, the grunt is out of action for the rest of the fight. Grunts don't get overflow damage like PCs do.

It might become necessary to know whether a grunt is alive or dead at the end of the combat. For instance, you might want to interrogate one of them to find out who sent them after you. In such cases, make a note of the type of damage that knocked the grunt out. If it was Stun damage, or Physical damage less than the grunt's Body, he's alive, at least momentarily. If the final attack was Physical, and the damage was greater than the grunt's Body, then he's dead.

PROFESSIONAL RATING

Some teams are just better trained than others. Players may find themselves facing craven, white-hooded thugs one day, and the next they're up against a battle-hardened, high-threat security squad. The former will break and run at the first sign of trouble; the latter will probably have the upper hand on the PCs. The difference is the **Professional Rating,** a rating that measures the group's determination and how well they can handle facing a team of shadowrunners.

The Professional Rating measures relative overall experience and discipline of a team. It's used as a dice pool modifier for resisting Social Skill Tests, and it deter-

mines the rating of their Edge attribute and Edge pool (**Group Edge,** at right).

The following list of ratings provides guidelines for assigning a group a Professional Rating.

Professional Rating 0 (Untrained): These guys are clueless. They might know how to use their weapons, but they've never trained as a unit and they're not familiar with combat. Their reactions tend to be clumsy and slow. If somebody in their group goes down, the rest will turn tail and run. Examples include mall cops and random street mobs.

Professional Ratings 1–2 (Semi-trained): While they're not hardened veterans, these grunts have had some training as a team and have seen a little combat. They act with purpose and a plan, but they haven't developed a veteran's coolness under fire. If more than a quarter of their team is taken out of the fight, the team will stop fighting and retreat. Examples include rookie beat cops, many gang members, and corporate security teams.

Professional Ratings 3–4 (Trained): These guys know what they're doing. They're well trained, have a fair amount of experience, and have learned to keep their heads together. They don't take foolish chances. If they take casualties over half of their group, they'll withdraw. Examples include professional bodyguards, experienced cops, and typical mercenary units.

Professional Ratings 5–6 (Elite): They live for this stuff. These are top-notch professionals who will not break. They'll fight to the last man, or until their mission parameters say that it's time to withdraw. Examples include HTR and SWAT teams, military special forces units, and fanatics.

GROUP EDGE

Grunts aren't normal characters. Their role in the game's story is limited, and they don't have as much Edge as normal characters do. In fact, they don't have their own Edge attributes at all; instead, they share a common Edge pool with their teammates. This is another means of making bookkeeping easier on the gamemaster. Instead of individual Edge point expenditures, the gamemaster can spend a point of the Group Edge on any grunt on the team.

A team of grunts has a Group Edge equal to its Professional Rating. Gamemasters should make sure that grunts only use Edge in situations that are critical to their goals. Gamemasters can adjust Group Edge as they see fit, especially if a team of grunts might turn up in the story again (in which case they might need a little more). They can also adjust when Group Edge points refresh, though it should never be more frequent than PCs recover their own Edge points.

LIEUTENANTS

Sometimes there's a member of a team of grunts who stands above the others. It might be competence that puts him in the lead, or it might be force of personality. Whatever it is, he's the one in charge. He's the lieutenant.

The lieutenant is a grunt, but he's a step up on the rest of the team. Teams only have one lieutenant. The rest of the team has a common set of attributes and skills, but lieutenants have their own. They're more powerful and competent than the other grunts on the team. Accordingly, when their attributes are added together, they should be at least 4 higher than the attributes for an individual grunt. Their Active skills, when totaled, should also exceed the other grunts by at least 4 points.

METAHUMAN CHARACTERISTICS TABLE

METATYPE	AVERAGE HEIGHT	AVERAGE WEIGHT	AVERAGE LIFESPAN (WORLDWIDE)
Dwarf	120 cm	54 kg	More than 100 years (projected)
Elf	190 cm	80 kg	Two hundred years or more (estimated)
Human	175 cm	78 kg	55-65 years
Ork	190 cm	128 kg	35-45 years
Troll	250 cm	335 kg	45-55 years

METATYPE ATTRIBUTE MODIFIERS

METATYPE	B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	E	INIT	ARMOR
Dwarf	+2	—	–1	+2	+1	—	—	—	–1	–1	—
Elf	—	+1	—	—	—	—	—	+2	+1	—	—
Ork	+3	—	—	+2	—	–1	—	–1	–1	—	—
Troll	+4	–1	—	+4	—	–1	–1	–2	–1	—	+1

Like other grunts, lieutenants don't have their own Edge, drawing on Group Edge instead. They do make their own Initiative Tests, however, and if they get the same Initiative as their team, they always go first. They possess a single Condition Monitor, like other grunts.

In combat, a lieutenant with the Leadership skill can try to use it to support his team. In addition to the usual ways to use the skill (**Using Leadership**, p. 141), he can use the skill to increase his group's Professional Rating by 1 higher than normal (which also adds 1 to their Edge).

SAMPLE GRUNTS

In the shadows, you're liable to run into just about anybody. Most of them are going to try to stop you from doing your job. These sample characters represent typical grunts at each Professional Rating. Each entry includes brief descriptions and game statistics for both a grunt and a lieutenant. The gamemaster shouldn't feel obliged to include a lieutenant every time a group of grunts shows up. The gamemaster can also use multiple lieutenants to make an elite squad of a particular type of grunt.

PROFESSIONAL RATING 0: THUGS & MOUTH BREATHERS

These are the kind of knuckle-dragging, slope-browed Neanderthals that typify the phrase "angry mob." They're employed by the likes of the Humanis policlub or TerraFirst!, or they simply coalesce on the street whenever something bad is about to happen. They're used to rough up and intimidate random groups of people. They're no match for an experienced combatant, however, and if they meet any real resistance, they're out of there.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS
2	3	2	3	3	1	3	1	6

Initiative	6 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	10
Armor	0
Skills	Blades 3, Clubs 3, Intimidation 3, Unarmed Combat 3
Gear	Club [Club, Acc 4, Reach 1, DV 6P] Knife [Blade, Acc 5, Reach —, DV 4P, AP –1] Meta Link commlink (Device Rating 1)

Lieutenant: Sometimes simple, random mayhem isn't enough. In cases like that, a more seasoned thug emerges to take charge and make sure kneecaps are broken. These lieutenants typically have a few scraps under their belts, but they're strictly small-time, outclassed by even rookie shadowrunners.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS
3	4	3	4	3	2	3	2	6

Initiative	6 + 1D6
Limits	Physical 5, Mental 4, Social 5
Armor	0
Skills	(Organization-specific Street Knowledge) 3, Blades 3, Clubs 4, Intimidation 5, Pistols 3, Unarmed Combat 4
Gear	Club [Club, Acc 4, Reach 1, DV 7P] Colt America L36 [Light Pistol, Acc 7, DV 7P, AP —, SA, RC —, 30 (c)] Knife [Blade, Acc 5, Reach —, DV 5P, AP –1] Meta Link commlink (Device Rating 1)

PLAYING GRUNTS

Yes, they're interchangeable. Yes, the rules streamline how the gamemaster handles them in various situations. They may just be grunts, but they still live in the same Sixth World as the PCs. They know how dangerous a firefight can be, whether they learned from practical experience or watching it on the trid. Whether trained for combat or not, most grunts use basic tactics like taking cover, waiting until a target is visible before taking their shot, and trying to get an advantageous position on their opponents. They're nameless, but they're not necessarily idiots.

It's the gamemaster's job to make sure that grunts actually challenge the players in his group. The best way to do this is to make sure that they have basic situational and tactical awareness.

PROFESSIONAL RATING 1: GANGERS & STREET SCUM

Halloweeners. Eye-Fivers. Brain Eaters. Red Rovers. Ancients. These names, and the gangs that carry them, can strike fear into just about anyone. Gangers are a step up from the garden-variety mob in terms of tactics and organization. They rule the streets of the sprawl whether they're on foot or on the back of a motorcycle. They're tough as nails and dumb as a box of hammers. They're also very territorial, and they have long memories regarding slights both real and perceived.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS
4	4	3	4	3	2	3	3	6

Initiative	6 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	10
Limits	Physical 5, Mental 3, Social4
Armor	9
Skills	Blades 4, Clubs 3, Etiquette (Street) 3 (+2), Intimidation 4, Pistols 4, Unarmed Combat 3
Qualities	Toughness
Gear	Armor vest [9] Browning Ultra-Power [Heavy Pistols, Acc 5 (6), DV 8P, AP –1, SA, RC —, 10 (c)] Knife [Blade, Acc 5, Reach —, DV 5P, AP –1] Meta Link commlink (Device Rating 1) 1 dose of cram or jazz (p. 411)

Lieutenant: Gangers who've threatened and shivved enough civilians (and fellow gangers) move up in the gang's command structure. Other gangers, especially newbies looking to survive long enough to move up the ranks themselves, look up to these guys with a frightening degree of loyalty.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS
4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	6

Initiative	8 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	10
Limits	Physical 6, Mental 4, Social 5
Armor	12
Skills	Blades 3, Etiquette (Street) 4 (+2), Intimidation 4, Leadership 1, Pistols (Semi-Automatics) 3 (+2), Thrown Weapons 2, Unarmed Combat (Cyberimplants) 3 (+2)
Qualities	Toughness
Augmentations	Retractable spur [Acc 6, DV 7P, AP –2]
Gear	Armor jacket [12] Browning Ultra-Power [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5 (6), DV 8P, AP –1, SA, RC —, 10 (c)] Knife [Blade, Acc 5, Reach —, DV 5P, AP –1] Sony Emperor commlink (Device Rating 2) 1 dose of cram or jazz (p. 411)

PROFESSIONAL RATING 2: CORPORATE SECURITY

Not every corporate facility hosts top-secret research requiring high-end protection, but they all require some sort of security. The thin grey line gives them that. The Seretech and Shiawase Decisions allow extraterritorial corps to use deadly force in their own defense, but most security guards aren't armed to the teeth; it's bad PR. They've been trained and equipped just enough to respond to basic threats and random street violence. Their training also tells them to contain bigger threats and take cover until reinforcements arrive.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS
4	4	4	3	3	2	3	3	4

Initiative	7 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	10
Limits	Physical 5, Mental 4, Social 5
Armor	12
Skills	Automatics 3, Etiquette 3, Perception 2, Pistols 4, Running 4, Unarmed Combat 3
Gear	Armor jacket [12] Colt Cobra TZ-120 [SMG, Acc 4 (5), DV 7P, AP —, SA/BF/FA, RC 2 (3), 32 (c)] Fichetti Security 600 [Light Pistol, Acc 6 (7), DV 7P, SA, RC (1), 30 (c)] Renraku Sensei commlink (Device Rating 3) Stun baton [Club, Acc 4, Reach 1, DV 9S(e), AP –5, 10 charges]

Lieutenant: Important corp facilities often have their security detachment reinforced with a wagemage for magical oversight. Magic is rare, so the mage is usually pulling security duty in addition to his normal job. Dedicated security mages are rare unless the installation or project is particularly important.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	M
3	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	6	3

Initiative	8 + 1D6
Astral Initiative	8 + 3D6
Condition Monitor	10
Limits	Physical 5, Mental 6, Social 6
Armor	12
Skills	Assensing 4, Astral Combat 3, Conjuring skill group 3, Counterspelling 4, Leadership 3, Pistols 2, Spellcasting 4
Qualities	Magician (Hermetic)
Gear	Armor jacket [12] Fichetti Security 600 [Light Pistol, Acc 6 (7), DV 7P, AP —, SA, RC (1), 30 (c)] Mage sight goggles (10m) Renraku Sensei commlink (Rating 3) Spellcasting (Combat) focus (Force 2)
Spells	Detect Life, Light, Physical Barrier, Powerbolt, Silence, Stunball

PROFESSIONAL RATING 3: POLICE PATROLS

When the corps started taking over, even basic public services were privatized. The best-known corporate law-enforcement providers are Knight Errant Security and Lone Star Security Services. The beat cops provided by these corps are relatively well-trained, and one of the most common opponents for shadowrunners.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS
4	5	4	3	3	2	3	3	6

Initiative	7 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	10
Limits	Physical 5, Mental 4, Social 5
Armor	12
Skills	Clubs 3, Perception 3, Pistols 4, Running 3, Unarmed Combat 4
Knowledge Skills	Law Enforcement 4, Local Crime 3
Gear	Ares Predator V [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5 (7), DV 8P, AP –1, SA, RC —, 15 (c)] Armor jacket[12] Defiance EX Shocker [Taser, Acc 4, DV 11S(e), AP –5, SS, RC —, 4 (m)] Renraku Sensei commlink (Rating 3) Sunglasses (image link, smartlink) Stun baton [Club, Acc 4, Reach 1, DV 9S(e), AP –5, 10 charges] 2 doses of jazz

Lieutenant: Corporate police veterans have seen and done just about everything on the streets. They know their ebbs and flows by instinct. Most have acquired augmentations along the way, either replacing limbs lost in service to the corp, or buying augmentations meant to give them an edge on the bad guys—like shadowrunners.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS
4	4	4(5)	3	4	3	5	4	5.1

Initiative	9 + 1D6 (11 + 1D6)
Condition Monitor	10
Limits	Physical 5 (6), Mental 5, Social 6
Armor	12
Skills	Automatics 4, Close Combat skill group 6, Intimidation 4, Leadership 5, Perception 5, Pistols 6, Sneaking 3
Knowledge Skills	Law Enforcement 6
Augmentations	Cybereyes [Rating 2, w/ flare compensation, image link, low-light vision, smartlink, thermographic vision), reaction enhancers 2
Gear	Ares Predator V [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5 (7), DV 8P, AP –1, SA, RC —, 15 (c)] Armor jacket [12] Defiance EX Shocker [Taser, Acc 4, DV 11S(e), AP –5, SS, RC —, 4 (m)] Erika Elite commlink (Device Rating 4) Stun baton [Club, Acc 4, Reach 1, DV 9S(e), AP –5, 10 charges] 2 doses of jazz

PROFESSIONAL RATING 4: ORGANIZED CRIME GANG

It is not uncommon for shadowrunners to cross paths with other criminals. The Mafia, the Yakuza, the Triads, and Koshari all have a need for groups of soldiers, for a variety of purposes, most of them underhanded. Their reputation as leg-breakers is well-earned. They are not renowned for their senses of humor.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS
4	5	4	4	4	5	4	3	6

Initiative	8 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	10
Limits	Physical 5, Mental 5, Social 6
Armor	9
Skills	Automatics 5, Blades 5, Intimidation 6, Perception 2, Pistols 4, Unarmed Combat 6
Qualities	Toughness
Gear	Ceska Black Scorpion [Machine Pistol, Acc 5, DV 6P, AP —, SA/BF, RC (1), 35 (c)] Lined coat [9] Knife [Blade, Acc 5, Reach —, DV 5P, AP –1] or sword [Blade, Acc 6, Reach 1, DV 7P, AP –2] Renraku Sensei commlink (Device Rating 3)

Lieutenant: Technomancers are rare commodities in the Sixth World. Often made into pariahs by normal society, many find they have no choice but to use their extraordinary gift in pursuit of a life of crime. The various criminal syndicates, while leery of them, are not going to turn them down. Even the hidebound Mafia won't reject a technomancer willing to lead or support a squad of soldiers on some particularly important errand.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	RES
2	3	4	2	5	5	5	4	6	5

Initiative	9 + 1D6
Matrix Initiative (Hot Sim)	9 + 3D6
Condition Monitor	10
Limits	Physical 5, Mental 7, Social 7
Armor	9
Skills	Compiling 7, Computer 5, Cybercombat 6, Decompiling 6, Leadership 4, Perception 5, Pistols 3, Registering 7, Software 6
Qualities	Natural Hardening, Technomancer
Gear	Beretta 201T [Light Pistol, Acc 6, DV 6P, AP —, SA/BF, RC (1), 21 (c)] Erika Elite commlink (Device Rating 4) Lined coat [9]
Complex Forms	Cleaner, Diffusion of Data Processing, Diffusion of Firewall, Editor, Infusion of Attack, Infusion of Data Processing, Resonance Spike, Tattletale, Transcendent Grid

PROFESSIONAL RATING 5: ELITE CORPORATE SECURITY

Like the nations they pretend to be, the megacorporations maintain paramilitary forces for use when their ordinary soldiers won't do. Units with names like Seraphim or Red Samurai are meant to engender fear in their opponents; their presence at a facility generally means the shadowrunners are not getting paid nearly enough.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS
6	5 (7)	5 (7)	4 (6)	4	4	5	3	1.9

Initiative	10 (12) + 3D6
Condition Monitor	11
Limits	Physical 7 (9), Mental 6, Social 4
Armor	18
Skills	Athletics skill group 6, Close Combat skill group 7, Etiquette (Corporate) 6 (+2), Firearms skill group 9, Perception 6, Sneaking 6
Augmentations	Cybereyes [Rating 2, w/ flare compensation, image link, low-light vision, smartlink, thermographic vision], muscle augmentation 2, muscle toner 2, wired reflexes 2
Gear	Ares Alpha [Assault Rifle, Acc 5 (7), DV 11P, AP –2, SA/BF/FA, RC 2, 42 (c)] Ares Predator V [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5 (7), DV 8P AP –1, SA, RC —, 15 (c)] Erika Elite commlink (Device Rating 4) Full body armor [15] & full helmet [+3] (w/ chemical seal)

Lieutenant: Take the most hardened elite trooper, and make him even more loyal to the corp than his fellows. Then make him hell on wheels in the Matrix. He's a true company man, a corporate troubleshooter trained to be equally adept at solo missions as he is leading a squad on a special mission.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS
5	6 (9)	5 (7)	4 (7)	5	5	5	4	1.3

Initiative	12 + 3D6
Condition Monitor	11
Limits	Physical 6 (8), Mental 7, Social 5
Armor	18
Skills	Athletics skill group 6, Close Combat skill group 7, Cracking skill group 7, Demolitions 5, Electronics skill group 6, Etiquette (Corporate) 4 (+2), Firearms skill group 8, Leadership 6, Perception 6, Sneaking 6
Augmentations	Cybereyes [Rating 3, w/ flare compensation, image link, low-light vision, smartlink, thermographic vision, and vision magnification], datajack, muscle augmentation 3, muscle toner 3, wired reflexes 2
Gear	Ares Alpha [Assault Rifle, Acc 5 (7), DV 11P, AP –2, SA/BF/FA, RC 2, 42 (c)] Ares Predator V [Hevy Pistol, Acc 5 (7), DV 8P, AP –1, SA, RC —, 15 (c)] Full body armor [15] & full helmet [+3] (w/ chemical seal) Shiawase Cyber-5 cyberdeck [DR 5, Atts 8 7 6 5, Prog 5]
Programs	Armor, Biofeedback, Configurator, Decryption, Encryption, Fork, Hammer, Lockdown

PROFESSIONAL RATING 6: ELITE SPECIAL FORCES

SEAL Team 6. Tír Ghosts. Sioux Wildcats. Trained to infiltrate and destroy behind enemy lines without being seen, these units are truly the best of the best. In a stand-up fight, they're devastating. Doing what they're trained to do, they're even worse.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS
6	6 (9)	5 (8)	5 (8)	5	4	6	4	2.3

Initiative	14 + 4D6
Condition Monitor	11
Limits	Physical 7 (10), Mental 7, Social 6
Armor	18
Skills	Athletics skill group 7 (10), Stealth skill group 6, Close Combat skill group 8, Demolitions 7, Firearms skill group 9, Perception 7
Gear	Full body armor [15] & full helmet [+3] (w/ chemical seal) Grapple gun, Hermes Ikon commlink (Device Rating 5) HK 227 [SMG, Acc 5 (7), DV 7P, AP –4, SA/BF/FA, RC (1), 28 (c), w/ APDS ammo] Smoke grenades (2) [Grenade, DV —, AP —, Blast 10m Radius] Thermal smoke grenades (2) [Grenade, DV —, AP —, Blast 10m Radius]

Lieutenant: Not all warriors on the Sixth World's battlefields are augmented. The world's military forces are always happy to accept magical recruits. Adepts fight alongside their cybernetic brothers-in-arms, and they are every bit as fast and deadly.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS
6	6 (9)	6 (9)	5 (8)	5	5	6	5	4

6	15 + 4D6
Condition Monitor	11
Limits	Physical 8 (11), Mental 7, Social 7
Armor	18
Skills	Athletics skill group 7 (10), Stealth skill group 6, Close Combat skill group 8, Demolitions 7, Firearms skill group 9, Perception 7
Qualities	Adept
Initiate Grade	2
Adept Powers	Improved Reflexes 3, Improved Agility 3, Improved Ability (Automatics) 3
Gear	Full body armor [15] & full helmet [+3] (w/ chemical seal) Grapple gun Hermes Ikon commlink (Device Rating 5) HK 227 [SMG, Acc 5 (7), DV 7P, AP –4, SA/BF/FA, RC (1), 28 (c), w/ APDS ammo] Smoke grenades (2) [Grenade, DV —, AP —, Blast 10m Radius] Thermal smoke grenades (2) [Grenade, DV —, AP —, Blast 10m Radius] Qi focus (Force 6, Improved Strength 3) Sword weapon focus [Force 2, Blade, Acc 6, Reach 1, DV 11P, AP –2]

PRIME RUNNERS

Grunts, no matter their Professional Rating, are nameless cannon fodder. They're not meant to be remembered, whether they're a match for the PCs or not. **Prime runners,** though, are different. They have names. They send the grunts out on their errands. They have their own plans and agendas. Most importantly, they move the plot along.

"Prime runner" is a catch-all term. They're not all shadowrunners as such. They are, however, significant characters who recur over the course of the adventure, and frequently over the course of a campaign. If grunts are extras and supporting cast, then prime runners are the special guest stars. They can fall anywhere along the spectrum, from the chief antagonist all the way to the lifelong friend of one of the PCs, and all points in between.

BUILDING PRIME RUNNERS

A prime runner shouldn't be thrown together. Like player characters, they should be built from the ground up, using the Priority System (see **Building a Shadowrunner**, p. 62), and advanced with Karma. As you build them, keep in mind the strength the NPC should have in relation to the PCs. This will determine how much Karma you'll need to spend on the prime runner (see the Prime Runner Creation and Advancement table below). There are four levels of prime runners.

Inferior: These prime runners are generally outclassed by the PCs in a straight fight, but the PCs should be cautious just the same. They frequently have friends who might just outclass the PCs right back.

Equal: These guys are on the same level as the PCs. Many of them will be shadowrunners like the PCs, but some may be company men, government agents, or syndicate enforcers.

Superior: This guy is more than a match for any of the PCs on an individual basis, but he'd be in trouble if the team decided to take him on all at once. They're not bound by the constraints on skills or gear that apply to starting characters.

Superhuman: Some guys you just don't mess around with, because they can probably take on your entire team and have a reasonable expectation of success. Like Superior prime runners, they are not bound by the constraints on gear and skills that apply to starting player characters. They should not be encountered very often, and when they are, it should be especially memorable.

PRIME RUNNER ADVANCEMENT

LEVEL	ADVANCEMENT KARMA
Inferior	80 percent of PC's average Karma award
Equal	100 percent of PC's average Karma award
Superior	125 percent of PC's average Karma award
Superhuman	200 percent of PC's average Karma award

FLESHING OUT PRIME RUNNERS

Prime runner NPCs should be memorable, fully-realized characters. They need to make an impression on the PCs, for good or for ill, and they can't do that if they're no deeper than the paper their stats are printed on. They're going to be carrying a lot of the weight of your adventure, even your campaign, so give them something to work with. They have to have their own plans and agendas, it's true, but they also need personalities, mannerisms, and quirks. Give your players vivid descriptions of the way the NPC dresses, how he carries himself, and that scar over his right eye.

Most importantly, though: Make sure you take notes. Write up a profile for each of your prime runners, detailing all the things you tell the players. This will help you keep track of all the NPCs for future reference.

All prime runners are built with the Priority Table (p. 65); if the campaign is Street or Prime Runner level (see p. 64), those same alternate rules apply for building your prime runner. Inferior NPCs use the same Priority Table as player characters, but they take the next lower level on the table for each category. For example, if you dedicate Priority A to Resources for an Inferior prime runner, you only get the Resources from Priority B. This means that an Inferior prime runner carries the burden of having two Priority E choices.

Once prime runners are built, they should be advanced with Karma to a level commensurate with their strength relative to the PCs. This Karma total is based on the Karma totals of the PCs, modified according to the Prime Runner Karma table.

Prime runners are a great opportunity to add flavor to your campaign. They can be a role model, ally, rival, or enemy of the player characters. They may charm the player characters with their swagger or annoy them with their arrogance, but either way they should make an impression, which can set you up for using them over the long haul (see Fleshing Out Prime Runners for thoughts on making them distinct.

If a prime runner encounters the player characters at many points in their lives, he should be advancing just like they are. If he doesn't, he's not going to be as much of a challenge the next time he shows up. Keep track of the Karma awards you give your PCs each time. When they receive Karma, the prime runner should also receive Karma, as modified according to the Prime Runner Karma table. Advance a prime runner the way you would a character you were playing—focusing on a few key areas where they will excel, while also building up a few skills that can make them capable of surprises. Give them what they need so they can be a formidable challenge.

THE HAND OF GOD

Sometimes shadowrunners get into a fracas. Sometimes that fracas is with one of your prime runners. Sometimes that fracas gets hectic. Sometimes, shadowrunners get lucky and geek one of your prime runners.

Sometimes, this is not terribly convenient for you and your plans, especially if those plans involve the prime runner recurring in a significant role in the future.

Often, you can work around this by exploiting anything in the scenario that could cast doubt on the NPC's ultimate demise. An explosion obscures the shadowrunners' view of his doom. The PCs might be knocked out simultaneously and he's gone when they awaken. He falls off a rooftop and lands somewhere out of sight. Always remember: If there's no body, he's not dead.

Every now and then, though, Fate contrives for a prime runner to die out in the open, in full view of everyone. If that should happen to you, you can use the Hand of God to get past this little speed bump. To use the Hand of God, you burn all of the prime runner's remaining Edge, permanently. Now he's no longer dead. He might look it, but he's actually clinging to life by his fingernails. Once something distracts the PCs, he'll recover just enough to claw his way out, or get rescued, or rebuilt. That kind of recovery, though, leaves its mark. He'll have a new, interesting scar that he can blame on the PCs, or he could lose a point in one or more attributes, or he could end up with an appropriate Negative quality.

FLESHING OUT CONTACTS

Contacts are, by definition, prime runners. They have names, lives, and personalities, too, and these should all be kept in mind as they are being developed. The biggest difference between contacts and most other prime runners is their ongoing relationship with the PCs. To some extent, contacts are always going to be allies to the PCs, if not outright friends. With that in mind, the players and the gamemaster should collaborate, to a point, on the contact's background and relationship to the PC.

Contacts have lives of their own, and they don't spend their every waking moment waiting for the PCs to call them for help. So what do they do for a living? Do they have families? Are they in over their heads with a Mafia loan shark? Is his daughter a chip-head? Once you have the answers to these types of questions, you're on your way from a collection of numbers on a sheet of paper to a unique individual living alongside the PCs.

Being a shadowrunner's contact is a two-way street, though. They don't just sit around waiting for the PCs to call them asking for stuff. Sometimes, they pick up their commlink and call the shadowrunners, asking them for stuff. They have lives off-stage; find ways to remind the players of this fact.

CONTACTS

You are who you know. In the shadows of the Sixth World, this is truer than you might want to believe.

Contacts are NPCs who serve as sources of the information, goods, and services that keep shadowrunners alive and well. Often, they can't get chip-truth about what they've gotten themselves into from anyone else. This section will help you get the most out of these all-important NPCs.

CONTACTS BY THE NUMBERS

Shadowrunners and their contacts are going to see an awful lot of each other. Like other prime runners, they should be built with the Priority System. Generally, they should be considered Inferior or Equal to the PCs. Assume that they're going to have the basic gear and lifestyle they need to do their day job. A Knight Errant detective is going to have a pistol, handcuffs, and light body armor, for instance, while Mr. Johnson is going to have a fancy commlink and high-nuyen suit.

Contacts are different from other prime runners because they're useful to the PCs. There are two Ratings that measure just how useful they are: Connection and Loyalty.

Connection: This measures the contact's influence, if any, measured on a scale of 1 to 12. The higher the Connection Rating, the more juice the contact has. The Connection Rating Table describes each level and shows how they should be portrayed. A character can't start the game with any contact with a Connection Rating higher than 6.

Loyalty: This shows you how much you can trust the contact. This is measured on a scale of 1 to 6. The higher the Loyalty Rating, the more the contact is willing to do for the PC. The Loyalty Rating Table gives details on each level and how it should be handled.

CONNECTION RATING TABLE

RATING	DESCRIPTION
1	Virtually no social influence; useful only for their Knowledge skills.
2	Has one or two friends with some Knowledge skills, or some minor social influence.
3	Has a few friends, but not a lot of social influence.
4	Knows several people in a neighborhood; a borough mayor or a gang leader.
5	Knows several people and has a moderate degree of social influence; a city councilman or a low-level executive it a small-to-medium corporation.
6	Known and connected across his state; a city/sprawl mayor or governor, notable fixer, or a mid-level executive in a medium-sized corporation.
7	Knows a lot of people over a large area, and has considerable social influence; often holds a leadership position in a national corporation.
8	Well-connected across a multi-state region; an executive in a state government or a national corporation.
9	Well-connected on his own continent, with considerable social influence; a mid-level executive in a small national government or AA megacorporation.
10	Well-connected worldwide, with significant social influence; a senior executive in a small national government or a AA megacorporation.
11	Extremely well-connected worldwide, with significant social influence; mid-level executive position in a major national government or AAA megacorporation.
12	Global power-player with extensive social influence; holds a key executive position in a major national government or AAA megacorporation.

LOYALTY RATING TABLE

RATING	DESCRIPTION
1	*Just Biz.* The relationship is purely mercenary, based solely on economics. The people involved may not even like each other, and they won't offer any sort of preferential treatment.
2	*Regular.* The relationship is still all business, but the parties treat each other with a modicum of mutual respect.
3	*Acquaintance.* The people in the relationship are friendly, but calling them actual friends might be stretching it. The contact is willing to be inconvenienced in small ways for the character but won't take a fall for him.
4	*Buddy.* There's actual friendship here, or at least solid mutual respect. The contact will go out of his way for the character if needed.
5	*Got Your Back.* The parties know and trust each other, and have for some time. The contact will back the character even in risky situations.
6	*Friend for Life.* The contact and character will go to the wall for each other, if that's what it takes.

The Loyalty Rating is applied as bonus dice whenever a PC negotiates with the contact (or vice-versa). The gamemaster should also use it as a modifier or a threshold (as appropriate) when someone else tries to put the squeeze on a contact about the runners.

USING CONTACTS

Friday night socials and a beer at the local bar are all well and good, but the real value of a contact is what they can do for you. There are four major things they can do: legwork, networking, swag, and favors. While these things are helpful, they rarely come for free (**Favor for a Friend**, p. 389).

Before a character can get help from his contacts, though, he has to get hold of them. Since they live their own lives when they're not helping the PCs, this isn't always as easy as it might sound. For the most part, there isn't a set process or test to determine a contact's availability; that is entirely up to the gamemaster. It depends on the needs of his story. If getting hold of a particular contact would give the PCs information that the gamemaster isn't ready for them to have, then that contact is caught in a meeting and can't take the PC's call. If the PCs don't call a particular contact, though, and that contact has vital information that the PCs are missing, then he might call the PCs for reasons of his own. This can serve the dual purpose of helping the players out and setting up another run later on down the road.

If the gamemaster doesn't care one way or another about a particular contact getting involved in the story, he should roll 2D6; the contact is available if the roll equals or exceeds the contact's Connection rating. The more influential the contact, after all, the busier they tend to be. Other factors might also be in play, such as how the character treated the contact the last time they dealt with each other, or who owes whom a favor.

Legwork: This is the primary function of most contacts in a *Shadowrun* game. Typically, legwork means discovering or following up on clues, and contacts provide one of the best ways for

shadowrunners to get the information they need. Most published adventures have a *Legwork* section that lists pertinent information that a character can get from a particular source.

When a character asks a contact for information, there is a chance that the contact may already know the answer. Make a skill test using any of the contact's appropriate Knowledge skills + linked attribute to determine if the contact knows something and exactly what he knows. The contact's Social limit applies to this test.

If the test is successful and the contact knows something, the gamemaster determines if the contact is willing to share that information. If it's inconsequential to them, contacts will generally share the info. If it's info the contact was asked to keep confidential, or it could hurt him if the wrong people learned he knew it, he will be understandably reluctant to share it. In this case, a Negotiation Test will be necessary to get the contact to divulge what he knows; apply the contact's Loyalty rating as extra dice to your roll. A PC's Street Cred can affect the Social limit for this test (see **Street Cred**, p. 372). You can lay out some nuyen to get the contact to be a little more willing to share; the gamemaster can set the exact parameters, but generally for each 100 x (7—Loyalty) nuyen you shell out, you get an extra die on your Negotiation Test (one of the few times you get to actually buy dice).

If the test fails and the contact doesn't know anything, he can still ask around to learn the answer. The contact makes an Extended Connection + Charisma [Social] Test, where the interval is 1 hour and the threshold is based on the gamemaster-determined difficulty of the question/information sought, as noted on the **Extended Test Thresholds** table (p. 48). The gamemaster can substitute an appropriate Knowledge skill for Charisma. He can also apply any modifiers he feels are appropriate, especially if the information sought isn't something the contact would normally have access to.

EXAMPLE

Thunder has found a vial of a reddish-brown liquid, and she has no idea whatsoever what it might be. She knows a chemist but can't reach him at the moment. She takes it by a street doc she knows, however. It looks like blood to the street doc, so he makes a Biology Test. It has blood in it, all right, but it's got some components he doesn't recognize. Thunder asks him if he can figure anything else out. The gamemaster makes an Extended Test using the doc's Charisma 3 + Connection 2. This isn't easy, so he sets the threshold at 18. Ten rolls (taking ten hours) later, the street doc calls Thunder back. He'd played a hunch and had an alchemist he knew take a look at it. Thunder found a vial of Renfield, a drug used by vampires to make willing slaves out of potential meals. She owes both the street doc and the alchemist a favor to be named later … if she survives her current job, that is.

Networking: Sometimes runners have to talk to someone they just don't know. Perhaps they're trying to convince a megacorp to stop hunting them, or they need help from a gang leader to deal with another gang. If the characters don't know, or can't approach, the right people, they're going to have to go to their contacts and ask them to be their go-betweens.

If a contact is approached to network on behalf of a shadowrunner, determine if there is any risk to the contact in making the needed inquiries. Dragons, for instance, might take a dim view of a request for a meeting if it's handled poorly; this qualifies as a high risk. If there is risk, you might have to convince your contact first (through Negotiation, Con, blackmail, or good role-playing). If the contact agrees to help out, the contact makes an Etiquette + Charisma [Social] Test with a threshold equal to the target NPC's Connection Rating. Apply any appropriate social modifiers, based on the relationship between the PCs and the target NPC and a dice pool bonus equal to the contact's Connection rating.

If the test succeeds, the contact has successfully arranged a meeting with the desired person, either in person or via the Matrix. Timing might be an issue; the gamemaster should use his best judgment. If the players push, tell them 4D6 hours. Once the meeting is set up, impressing the NPC, either positively or negatively, is up to the player characters. This generally ends the contact's role in networking. If the meeting goes really well or really badly, however, it can affect the contact's rep accordingly.

The contact might not be able to arrange a direct meeting with the desired individual, but he might be able to arrange a meeting with someone close to that person. This person, in turn, can then be negotiated with to arrange the meeting with the NPC in question. These meetings are easier for the contact to arrange, and generally entail less risk to his life, limbs, and reputation.

Swag: This is like networking, except you're specifically trying to buy or sell something. A contact can use her connections to find potential buyers or sellers. Contacts looking for traders follow the same procedures for Availability and Fencing Tests (p. 418) that PCs do, using their own Charisma and Negotiation skill instead of yours, along with their Connection rating as a modifier to their Social limit. If you're willing to sweeten the deal for the potential trading partner, let your contact know in advance—they're good, but they're not psychic.

Favors: This covers just about anything else that a contact can do for a character, from patching up a shot-up vehicle to patching up a shot-up shadowrunner, and almost everything in between. Any kind of direct aid rendered by a contact usually counts as a favor.

There are two types of favors: business services and personal assistance. Business services are those that you could obtain anywhere, from anybody, such as medical treatment or equipment repair. The problem with getting it from a complete stranger is the fact that a lot of those strangers keep records, and that's not al-

FAVOR RATING TABLE

RATING	DESCRIPTION
1	*Minor.* Deliver a message to someone. Provide access to a low-level restricted security area (airport boarding area, police station).
2	*Low Risk.* Loan use of specialized equipment (up to 5,000 nuyen in value). Corporate action requiring the signature of a first-line supervisor.
3	*Medium.* Provide access to a mid-level restricted security area (standard corporate research lab).
4	*Moderate Risk.* Loan use of specialized equipment (up to 50,000 nuyen in value). Corporate requisition requiring the signature of a middle manager.
5	*Serious.* Provide access to a high-level security area (FBI offices, AA megacorporate headquarters, AAA regional headquarters).
6	*Major Risk.* Loan of specialized equipment (up to 500,000¥ in value). Corporate requisition requiring the signature of a senior manager or junior executive.

ways a good thing for a shadowrunner. A contact will still charge what the market will bear for services rendered, but he'll also do it all under the table. If you want to haggle for a lower price, you can try a Negotiation + Charisma [Social] Opposed Test, adding your contact's Loyalty Rating to your dice pool. Net hits on either side raise or lower the fee by ten percent, as appropriate.

Personal assistance is a little harder to define. It covers many kinds of aid that aren't paid for with cash. Whether or not a contact is willing to render personal assistance is up to player and gamemaster judgment. Occasionally there might be a need for more formal guidance.

Some favors, obviously, are bigger than others. The gamemaster will look on the Favor Rating Table to see how big a personal favor you might be asking for. Favor Ratings range from 1 to 6; the bigger the number, the more you're asking their contact to take on. Contacts will normally agree to personal assistance with a Favor Rating equal to or less than their Loyalty Rating. If the Favor Rating exceeds the contact's Loyalty Rating, you'll need to convince the contact with a Negotiation + Charisma [Social] Opposed Test.

Of course, you'll owe your contact at least one favor to be named later. How the favor is repaid depends on the gamemaster, but it should be at least equal in Favor Rating. Of course, a gamemaster can use a favor owed as a plot hook for a new adventure (**Favor for a Friend**, at right).

GLITCHES

When dealing with contacts, glitches can happen on both sides. When they do, the gamemaster has a number of options depending on what the contact was doing for the character. If it was legwork, for instance, he might get some facts wrong and steer the PC in the wrong direction. If he was acquiring swag, the item might be used, or have some unfortunate bugs. Otherwise, a glitch probably means that a third party has learned about what the PC is up to. The gamemaster determines if and when the runners learn about the information leak, and whether they can do something about it or if they find out about it the hard way.

A critical glitch, of course, tells you that things have gone completely pear-shaped. A contact provides information that is flat-out untrue. Someone in the supply chain decides to double-cross the PCs. One of the NPCs involved has taken offense at something that was said. Worse yet, word about what the PCs are doing has reached the absolute worst person it could. A character could find their arch-nemesis or a devoted officer of the law pursuing them with less-than-savory intentions.

FAVOR FOR A FRIEND

Contacts do things for you—but not for nothing. Everything has a price, remember? They'll expect some kind of quid pro quo, usually something along the line of their Connection Rating x 100 nuyen for information or expertise, up to around their Connection Rating x 1,000¥ for goods or services rendered; they'll probably lop off up to their Loyalty x ten percent if you've been nice to them. This doesn't have to be a straight-up monetary donation—you could take them out for a nice dinner, or buy them a new commlink, put in some work at their favorite charity, get their apartment painted, or something else they'd like—but very few people are allergic to cash.

Of course, you can always owe them one. Which means that sometimes you find yourself doing something for a contact. Sometimes, a favor for a friend will turn into a full-fledged job, one that goes beyond the typical work-for-nuyen shadowrun. This lets the gamemaster get creative and work in plot twists, new conflicts, and other drama into their campaign.

Doing a favor like this gives you the chance to choose your own jobs instead of waiting for a call from your friendly neighborhood fixer. It also allows you to pursue personal interests and take on opponents without worry-

ing about being stabbed in the back by a sneaky Mr. Johnson—though that can always happen as the job progresses (who can you really trust in the Sixth World, anyway?).

As the game progresses, contacts are going to become more valuable. When that happens, they're also more likely to ask you to repay previous assistance with a favor. As the contact becomes more useful, of course, the favors become more harrowing. And isn't that as it should be, omae?

SAMPLE CONTACTS

Anybody, of any archetype, can be a contact, but there are several that are more common than others. The following sample contacts are the most likely to be dealing with shadowrunners of all levels of experience. For each contact, there's a brief description, as well as a list of uses served by the contact, typical meeting places, similar contacts, and game statistics. Due to the flexible nature of a contact's equipment, the Armor Rating is not included in their stat block.

BARTENDER

Uses: Information, additional contacts, back rooms for private meets

Places to Meet: Any bar/nightclub

Similar Contacts: Bar/nightclub owner, bouncer, waitress, stripper

Bartenders serve drinks. They also serve as counselor and crying shoulder to nearly everyone who comes into their joint. They see and hear just about everything, which is why it's so very important to make his acquaintance and make his tip jar a little heavier.

Bartenders know everyone, so they'll be able to let you know who hasn't been in for a while, whose kid has run away from home this time, whose wife is screwing some other guy—just about anything you might need to know. He can also connect you to the local rumor mill, and he might have something juicy that one of his clients let slip in a haze of gin and tonic. He can guide newbies to suppliers of a variety of goods and services. It'll all cost you, of course—sometimes straight-up cred, sometimes a round for the house to keep the good will flowing.

He's known for his discretion, however. He won't just spill to anyone without a really good reason. Like we said, it'll cost you ... but it's usually worth it to keep him (and sometimes his other customers) happy.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	E	ESS
3	4	3	3	4	3	3	4	2	6

Initiative	6 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	10
Limits	Physical 4, Mental 5, Social 6
Skills	Etiquette (Street) 6 (+2), Intimidation 5, Longarms (Shotguns) 4 (+2), Negotiation 5, Pistols 4, Unarmed Combat 4
Knowledge Skills	Alcohol 6, Media Stars 5, Sports 6, Street Rumors 6, Trivia 6

BEAT COP

Uses: Information, additional contacts, gear

Places to Meet: The streets of his beat, coffee shops

Similar Contacts: Detective, snitch, undercover cop, rent-a-cop

They've walked the cold streets of their beat for more years than they care to remember, and they've seen everything that happens there. Newcomers and old-timers, BTL dens and gang turf—he's got the skinny on all of it, and what he doesn't know now, he will soon enough. His network of snitches will make sure of that. If you're good to him, he might even share.

Some beat cops patrol on foot, some in cars or on motorcycles. Some of them, especially in some towns in the NAN, even patrol on horseback. Some are straight shooters, and some of them would sell their own mothers if the price was right. The key to working with the beat cop is to know what makes him tick. Find out what he wants and help him get it. He'll repay you with a wealth of information, or arrange meetings with people when you need it.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	E	ESS
4	4	4	3	3	3	4	3	3	6

Initiative	8 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	10
Limits	Physical 5, Mental 5, Social 5
Skills	Automatics 4, Clubs 5, Etiquette (Street) 6 (+2), Intimidation 5, Leadership 4, Perception 6, Pistols 6, Running 4, Unarmed Combat 5
Knowledge Skills	Crime Syndicates 7, Illegal Goods 6, Law Enforcement 4, Local Gangs 6, Police Procedures 8, Street Rumors 6

FIXER

Uses: Jobs and cred, information, gear, additional contacts

Places to Meet: Local bars or clubs, coffee shops, street corners where surveillance is next to impossible

Similar Contacts: Fence, loan shark, Mr. Johnson

If you know nobody else, make the acquaintance of a fixer. They are the center of the shadowrunning universe, and they know everyone you might need to know. Find one, get on his good side, and you'll have a shot at prospering in the shadows. He can get you anything you need ... for a price. After all, nothing's free in the shadows.

Fixers are only as good as their connections, which they go to great lengths to cultivate. They're a one-man combination of employment agency, procurement firm, and fence. They make their living on whom and what they know, and by how well they can make deals between interested parties looking to buy or sell goods and services. A shadowrunner has something hot that he needs to unload pronto? The fixer's the man he needs to see. Mr. Johnson needs a team to extract someone from a competitor's compound? The fixer's the man who sets

up the meeting. A team needs a specialist to pull off a tricky run? You guessed it; the fixer knows who to call.

These kinds of services don't come cheap, however. A fixer takes a percentage from every transaction, and the better he is, the bigger that cut is going to be. Once you've found a quality fixer, stay on his good side. You might get a discount if he likes you, and even better, you might get another job without having to relocate to another city and start all over again.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	E	ESS
3	3	3	3	4	3	5	5	3	6

Initiative	8 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	10
Limits	Physical 4, Mental 5, Social 7
Skills	Computer 7, Data Search 8, Etiquette (Street) 8 (+2), Negotiation 9, Perception 6, Pistols 5
Knowledge Skills	Corporate Rumors 8, Fences 7, Gear Values 9, Shadowrunner Teams 8

MAFIA CONSIGLIERI

Uses: Information, additional contacts

Places to Meet: Restaurants, casinos, bars

Similar Contacts: Yakuza wakagashira, Triad Incense Master

There are occasions in the shadows when one must ask a favor of the local Mafia don. Of course, one does not simply walk into the don's office, at least not intact. To see the man on the throne, you speak to the power behind the throne, the don's consiglieri, or counselor. He is not actually a member of the family, but he has access to their secrets by dint of being the don's most trusted advisor. This confidence gives him information and insight on the family's business, their plans, and their mindset.

He's also not a fool. These confidences aren't given up lightly, since his life would be worthless if the family got wind of their secrets being told out of school. You'll have to offer him something of value to the family to get that information. Help him deal with a problem that the family shouldn't touch on its own, or paydata on its enemies, and he'll be happy to reward you appropriately. Betray his trust, and he'll likewise be happy to reward you appropriately.

The consiglieri typically holds a traditional job outside the family business. Many of them are, perhaps not surprisingly, lawyers.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	E	ESS
3	3	3	3	4	4	4	5	3	6

Initiative	7 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	10
Limits	Physical 4, Mental 6, Social 7
Skills	Computer 5, Etiquette (Mob) 7 (+2), Instruction 6, Leadership 7, Negotiation 6, Perception 6, Pistols 3
Knowledge Skills	Business 6, Law 7, Local Politics 6, Mob Politics 9, Police Procedures 5, Psychology 7

MECHANIC

Uses: Repair services, used wheels, and other vehicles

Places to Meet: Local garage, gas station, automobile chop shop, used car lot, aircraft hangar

Similar Contacts: Tech wizard

Sometimes, the only thing between a shadowruner and disaster is a vehicle that moves like a scalded cat. To keep your vehicles in that category, it's good to know a mechanic. A good mechanic can fix what's broken and improve what's not. Given sufficient time and cash, he can make the worst junkyard refugee into a serviceable vehicle. The more miraculous the work, of course, the more it's going to cost you. As often as not, "hopeless case" can simply be read as "very expensive."

He also doubles as a car salesman, or at least an agent for one. If you need a quick, cheap set of wheels, a new drone, or that sweet new motorcycle you've been lusting over, he knows someone who can get it for you.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	E	ESS
4	3	3	4	3	4	4	3	3	6

Initiative	7 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	10
Limits	Physical 5, Mental 5, Social 5
Skills	Aeronautics Mechanic 6, Automotive Mechanic 8, Computer 4, Gunnery 3, Hardware 6, Industrial Mechanic 4, Pilot Ground Craft 6
Knowledge Skills	Chop Shops 8, Combat Biking 7, Vehicles 8

MR. JOHNSON

Uses: Shadowruns, job-related information, additional contacts

Places to Meet: Just about anywhere he wants

Similar Contacts: Company man, fixer, government agent

For someone who doesn't officially exist, Mr. Johnson sure gets around. And that's just as well, since without him, all shadowrunners would be out of a job. He's the man between the shadows and the corps, and he's the one who gets the whole thing started. He's the one who gets his hands dirty so the corps and the governments don't have to. He helps put the "deniable" into deniable assets.

Mr. Johnson runs the meeting, hires the talent, and pays for results. He gives you the information you need to do the job he's hiring you for, or at least the information he believes you're going to need. He can also get you some of the specialty items you might need to complete the job.

He has deep connections and a long memory. While he has a reputation for double-crossing his assets, a lot of that is urban legend. Treat him well, and he'll generally return the favor. Screw him, though, and you might find yourself the target of one of his shadowruns somewhere down the line.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	E	ESS
3	3	3	3	4	4	5	5	3	3

Initiative	8 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	10
Limits	Physical 4, Mental 6, Social 7
Skills	Computer 6, Con 4, Etiquette (Corporate) 7 (+2), Intimidation 4, Negotiation 8, Perception 5, Pistols 5
Knowledge Skills	Corporate Finances 5, Corporate Rumors 8, Psychology 5, SOTA Technology 6

STREET DOC

Uses: Medical care, information, additional contacts, gear (drugs)

Places to Meet: Local clinic, body shop

Similar Contacts: EMT, ambulance driver, street mage/shaman

Traditional medical treatment, for a shadowrunner, is not always a convenient choice. There's a great deal of paperwork, after all. It's times like this when knowing a street doc can be the difference between breathing for another day and becoming ghoul chow.

Street docs operate out of local clinics and body-mod shops, and they don't ask a lot of questions. They have comparatively reasonable rates. They might not have an actual medical degree. Street docs are, often as not, med-school dropouts, nurses, or former combat medics. Beggars can't be choosers in the shadows, though, and if you're bleeding profusely and legitimate medical care is out of the question, your choice is pretty clear.

Not only will they put you back together, but many street docs will also rebuild you. Many of them have cyberware installation as one of their income streams. It's often used ware, salvaged from runners who didn't make it, but it's usually a pretty good deal in terms of price.

Keep your street doc happy. He'll cut you a better deal, you'll get treated better, and he'll be a lot less likely to kill you on the table and sell your parts to organleggers and other shadowrunners.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	E	ESS
3	5	3	3	3	5	4	3	3	3

Initiative	7 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	10
Limits	Physical 4, Mental 6, Social 5
Skills	Cybertechnology 7, First Aid 6, Medicine 8, Negotiation 4, Perception 6
Knowledge Skills	Biology 7, Medical Advances 5, Organleggers 4, Psychology 4, Smugglers 3

TALISMONGER

Uses: Magical items, magic-related information, additional contacts

Places to Meet: Talismonger's shop, occult library, coffee shop

Similar Contacts: Fixer, street mage/shaman, corporate wagemage

The Awakened are exceedingly rare, but they're still like other consumers. They have their special needs: magical foci, fetishes, ritual supplies and components. Fortunately, there are people out there equipped to meet those needs.

Talismongers see just about everyone in the area with any sort of magical talent pass through their shops sooner or later. This makes them a great source of not just magical equipment, but vital information about what's going on in the local Awakened community. It also means they're the ones to go to if you need the services of a good street mage.

Many talismongers are also enchanters, enabling them to provide shadowrunners with custom magical gear. They can also be good to have around when you need to know if that talisman you lifted on your last job is real or a mass-produced geegaw from a sweatshop in Hong Kong.

One word of advice, though: Don't piss them off. They're great people to have on your side, but you make them mad and you might just find your last purchase has run out of mojo right when you really need it.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	E	ESS	M
3	3	3	3	5	4	5	4	3	6	4

Initiative	8 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	11
Limits	Physical 4, Mental 6, Social 7
Qualities	Aspected Magician (Enchanter)
Skills	Arcana 5, Artisan 5, Assensing 6, Enchanting skill group 6, Etiquette (Magical) 5 (+2), Negotiation 6, Perception 3
Knowledge Skills	Magical Background 5, Magical Goods 5, Metalworking 6, Woodworking 6

CRITTERS

When the world Awakened in 2011, mankind was not the only living thing that was forever changed. The same returning magic that created metahumanity also created metaspecies of almost every plant and animal species. Mankind contributed to this with rampant pollution and genetic experimentation gone amok. Spirits and other creatures from planes of existence we could barely conceive crossed over into our world as well. Without warning, otherworldly beings and monsters from fairy tales and myths walked the face of the earth alongside metahumanity.

"Critter" is a catch-all term that refers to all the non-human creatures that characters might encounter as they ply their trades in the shadows. Some are mundane, while some are paranormal; some are mindless beasts, while others are just as intelligent as metahumans (if not

more so). They're always played as NPCs, and can run the gamut of NPC levels from grunts to prime runners. The listed statistics should never be considered the final say on a critter's abilities. Magic being unpredictable, the gamemaster can choose to add or remove powers from a particular critter, or alter the way one of the critter's powers works, to keep the player characters on their toes.

For critters that operate in packs or swarms, the gamemaster can use the rules for grunts to make his life easier. If a gamemaster wants to have a critter highlight an adventure or campaign, he can make a critter a prime runner. Prime runner critters are usually, but not always, limited to sapient paracritters such as dragons or vampires.

ATTRIBUTES AND SKILLS

Critters, like characters, have a full set of attributes. These can show considerable variation, since critters can run the gamut in size from a rat to a great dragon. Sometimes a critter's capability in one attribute or another will be small enough to merit a rating of zero. This means that it doesn't get to add dice from that attribute into its dice pool for any tests. It can still use any skill it possesses that is linked to that attribute, it just gets no dice from the attribute rating.

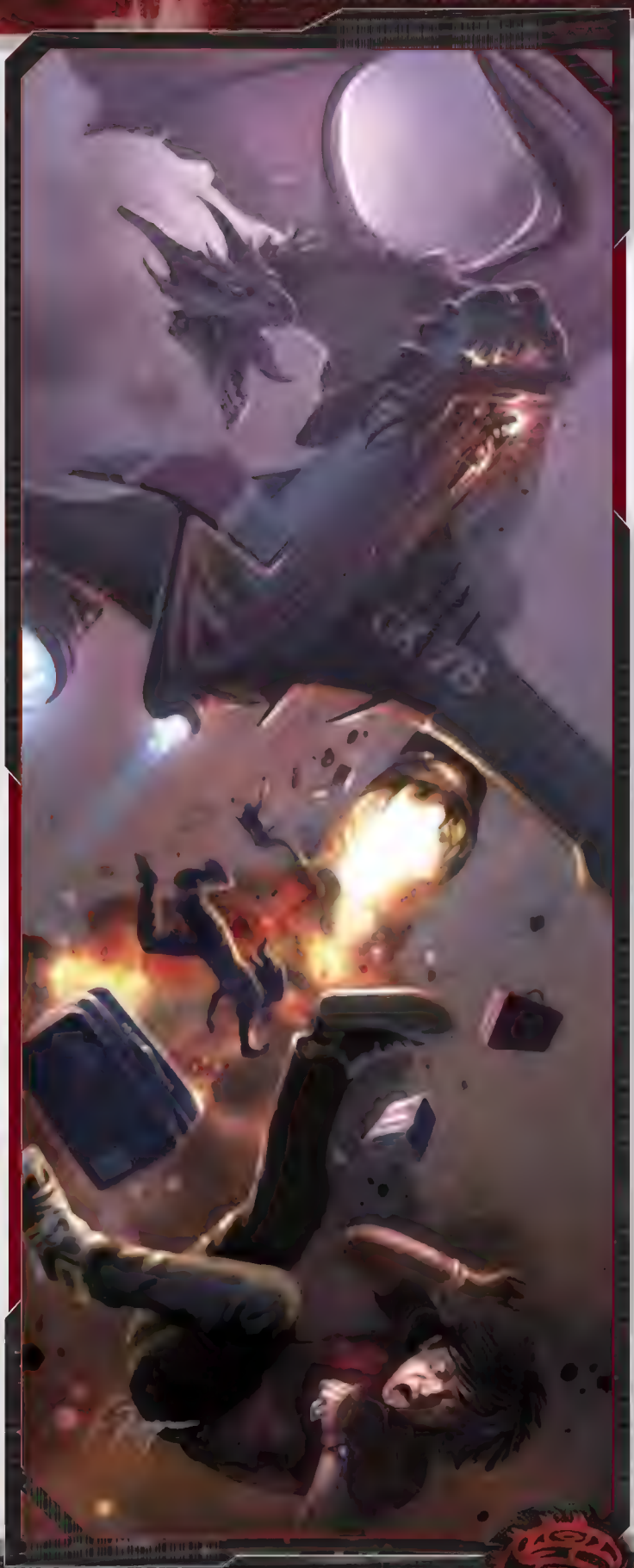
As mentioned above, the gamemaster is free to alter the attributes of particular critters as he sees fit to represent larger or smaller specimens of a critter. Attributes can be adjusted up to 3 points in either direction, though it can never be reduced to below zero.

Also like characters, critters have skills. In most cases, these represent innate knowledge and ability. Many critters have the Unarmed Combat skill, for instance, while others have Tracking or Swimming. If a critter doesn't possess a skill, they're considered Unaware in that skill (p. 131), unless they have the Sapience power, in which case they're considered Untrained. As with attributes, skills can be adjusted up or down as the gamemaster sees fit.

Most Awakened critters possess a Magic attribute, indicating the critter's innate magical potential. This does not, however, automatically give them the ability to cast spells, conjure spirits, or astrally perceive or project, unless they have the Magician or Mystic Adept qualities.

MOVEMENT

Walking, slithering, flying, or swimming—all critters have some way of getting around. Not all of them move at the same speed as humans, of course, and some of them have more than one way of doing it. Like characters, critter movement is based on Agility (see **Movement**, p. 161). Movement rates are listed as a walking multiplier, a running multiplier, and a Sprint increase in meters per hit in the following format: x2/x4/+2.



Flight: Critters capable of flight possess a special skill, Flight, which is linked to Agility. This skill measures how well the creature can fly and is used the same way as the Running or Swimming skills.

POWERS

Whenever a critter flies, rends something with its claws, or paralyzes a target with a mere touch, it's using a **critter power.** Powers are the special abilities that a critter possesses. Some critter powers are natural, such as their claws or tough skin. Others, such as a barghest's Paralyzing Howl, are magical in nature.

In order for a critter to use a power against a target, they have to be in the same state, either astral or physical. Astral forms cannot affect physical targets, and physical forms cannot affect astral targets (see **The Astral World,** p. 312). An astral critter that can materialize can affect physical targets if they do so, however, and dual-natured critters can interact with the astral plane as easily as the physical one.

Each entry lists several common characteristics of each power:

Type: Like spells, powers may be either mana (M) or physical (P). Mana powers do not affect nonliving targets, whereas physical powers cannot be used in astral space or to affect astral forms.

Action: Most powers require a certain type of action (Simple or Complex) to activate. Some are always on and require no action to activate; these are listed with an Action of "Auto."

Range: All powers have a range; this is listed as Line of Sight (LOS), Touch, or Self (the power affects only the critter itself). The Line of Sight rules for spellcasting (p. 281) also apply to critter powers. Unless otherwise noted, a power may only be used on one target at a time.

Duration: This entry indicates how long the power's effect lasts.

Powers that are constantly in effect (those with an Action of Auto) have a duration of *Always*.

Instant powers take effect and vanish in the same action, though they may have lasting effects (damage, for example).

Sustained powers may be maintained over time at no effort or cost. Because these powers are innate, the critter is not subject to any strain or modifiers for keeping the effect going the way sustained spells do—although normal sustaining rules apply if the critter casts and maintains a spell through Sorcery. Even taking damage will not distract the critter from its ability to sustain. As with sustained spells, line of sight does not have to be maintained after the power takes hold of its target. Critters may sustain a number of powers (or multiple uses of the same power) at one time equal to their Magic.

Permanent powers must be maintained for a specific period of time before the effects become permanent, as noted in the power's description.

Some powers have a *Special* duration. The duration of the power's effect depends on other factors; these are noted in the description.

ACCIDENT

Type: P **Action:** Complex
Range: LOS **Duration:** Instant

Critters with this power can cause seemingly normal accidents to occur. The exact nature of the accident is for the gamemaster to determine, based on what the target is doing and what's going on around him. This power isn't, in and of itself, dangerous, but circumstance and environment can come into play to make it so. Tripping on your own feet in front of rush-hour traffic could be hazardous to your health, for instance.

When a critter targets someone with this power, make an Opposed Test, using the critter's Magic + Willpower against the target's Reaction + Intuition. If the critter wins, treat it as if the target rolled a glitch on a test. If the critter scores 4 or more net hits, the accident is treated as a critical glitch—it's not just an embarrassing fumble, it's a potential catastrophe. A critter can use this power on a number of targets at once equal to its Magic rating.

ANIMAL CONTROL

Type: M **Action:** Complex
Range: LOS **Duration:** Sustained

Some critters can manipulate other critters, particularly (but not always) mundane ones. This power lets the critters control the behavior of an animal or a group of animals. It has to be a normal behavior for the target animal. A flock of birds, for instance, couldn't steal a motorcycle or fire a pistol, but they could attack someone, follow someone else, or simply be made to fly away. If the target critter leaves the controlling critter's line of sight, it can't be commanded any longer, but it will continue to follow any orders they had already been given for the critter's Charisma in minutes. The critter may control a number of small animals (cats, rats, etc.) equal to its Charisma x 5, or a number of larger animals (wolves, lions, bears, etc.) equal to its Charisma. This power may not be used on any critter with the Sapience power.

ARMOR

Type: P **Action:** Auto
Range: Self **Duration:** Always

Whether it comes in the form of dermal bone deposits, scales, or just a thick hide, a critter with this power has some inherent protection from physical attacks. The critter's natural Armor rating is cumulative with any armor worn.

ASTRAL FORM

Type: M **Action:** Auto
Range: Self **Duration:** Always

A critter with this power only exists in the astral plane. Only astral attacks or mana spells/powers may hurt an astral critter; physical attacks or spells/powers have no effect. The reverse is also true; an astral critter can only affect dual-natured beings or those on the astral plane, whether through astral projection or astral perception.

Critters with this power may manifest on the physical plane in the same way as astrally projecting magicians (see p. 313).

BINDING

Type: P **Action:** Complex
Range: Special **Duration:** Instant

Whether it's through webbing, a sticky tongue, or some magical force, the critter with this power can make its target stick to any surface the target happens to be touching (often, but not always, to the critter itself). The target may attempt to break free from this with a Complex Action, rolling Strength + Body against the critter's Magic + Willpower. If the target prevails, he has escaped. If he fails, he remains immobilized until the next time he can attempt an escape. The range of this power depends on how the critter binds its targets; it may shoot webbing (Range: LOS), have a sticky body (Range: Touch), or just be good at sticking to things (Range: Self).

COMPULSION

Type: M **Action:** Complex
Range: LOS **Duration:** Sustained

This power enables the critter to compel a target to perform a specific action, even if that action might not be in the target's best interests. The critter must make an Opposed Test using its Magic + Charisma against the target's Willpower + Logic; if the target loses, he must immediately carry out the compelled action. The victim immediately recognizes that he was compelled to act after this power is used. This power can't be used to plant suggestions for future compelled actions; once the power is dropped, the target's mind is his own once again.

CONCEALMENT

Type: P **Action:** Simple
Range: LOS **Duration:** Sustained

Critters with this power can mystically hide themselves, other people, or things that someone else is seeking. Concealment subtracts a number of dice equal to the critter's Magic from any Perception Tests to locate the concealed subject.

Concealment can be used simultaneously on a number of metahuman-sized targets equal to the critter's Magic, or a number of much smaller targets (cats, babies, rats, etc.) equal to the critter's Magic x 5. Concealed subjects can see each other if the critter allows it. The effect lasts until the target is spotted or the critter stops sustaining the power.

CONFUSION

Type: M **Action:** Complex
Range: LOS **Duration:** Sustained

This power renders the target unable to think clearly. He becomes indecisive, forgetful, and befuddled. The critter makes an Opposed Test using its Magic + Willpower against the target's Willpower + Logic. Any net hits the critter scores become a negative dice pool modifier for any action the target character takes.

CORROSIVE SPIT

Type: P **Action:** Complex
Range: Special **Duration:** Instant

The critter's saliva (or some other chemical it can shoot) is extremely caustic and can be used as a weapon. It's treated as a standard ranged combat attack, using the critter's Exotic Ranged Weapon skill + Agility [Physical], with range increments of (Body) meters. The spit causes Acid damage (p. 170), with a DV of (Magic x 2)P and an AP of -(critter's Magic).

DRAGONSPEECH

Type: M **Action:** Auto
Range: LOS **Duration:** Instant

Draconic physiology is not capable of vocal speech. Dragons (and some other, possibly related, critters) are able to communicate telepathically with other beings through this power—as many as they like within line of sight—no matter what the beings' own Language skills look like. This telepathic communication can't be picked up by technological means, so dragons wishing to communicate with dragonspeech through modern technology must employ a metahuman as a "translator." This power lets the critter project speech, but the target(s) cannot respond the same way without their own telepathic ability.

DUAL NATURED

Type: P **Action:** Auto
Range: Self **Duration:** Always

Dual-natured critters are active in both the astral plane and the physical plane at the same time. They can affect both astral and physical beings. They can perceive and interact with the astral plane like characters using astral perception (see **Astral Perception**, p. 312). Being dual natured, though, is different from astral perception in that a dual-natured critter always senses both the physical and astral worlds; they don't have to shift back and forth (and, in fact, cannot do so). Their minds are accustomed to processing both astral and physical sensations, so dual-natured critters don't suffer the -2 dice pool modifier for interacting with the physical world while astrally perceiving.

ELEMENTAL ATTACK

Type: P **Action:** Complex
Range: Special **Duration:** Instant

Whether it's a burst of flame or a bolt of lightning, a critter with this power can project a damaging stream of elemental energy. The power has a specific element type—for example, spirits of fire have Elemental Attack (Fire). The power is a ranged attack, with range increments of (Magic) meters, using the critter's Exotic Ranged Weapon skill + Agility [Physical] to attack. The attack's DV is (Magic x 2)P with an AP of -(critter's Magic), plus as the appropriate elemental damage (p. 170), as listed in the critter's statistics.

ENERGY AURA

Type: P **Action:** Auto
Range: Self **Duration:** Always

This critter is surrounded by a field of damaging energy, which can take the form of fire, electricity, intense cold, or the like. The power has a specific element type—for example, spirits of fire have Energy Aura (Fire). The critter adds its Magic to the Damage Value of any melee attack it makes. The damage may have a specific type (**Elemental Damage**, p. 170) and has an AP of -(critter's Magic).

Successful melee attacks against a critter with Energy Aura also damage the attacker. The attacker makes a Damage Resistance Test against a DV equal to the critter's Magic x 2. This attack has an AP of -(critter's Magic). Unless indicated in the critter's description, this power is always on and cannot be turned off.

ENGULF

Type: P **Action:** Complex
Range: Touch **Duration:** Sustained

This allows a critter to draw a target into itself or the terrain it controls, smothering or otherwise enveloping the target and causing damage. This is a melee attack. If it succeeds, it inflicts damage equal to its Magic x 2 (see below for specific effects by element), and the critter has engulfed its target in its grasp. Net hits on the melee attack increase this damage normally. The target gets a Damage Resistance Test as normal, using Body + Armor; the attack has an AP of -(critter's Magic).

Once engulfed, a target is trapped and cannot move. Every time its Action Phase comes up after this, until the target escapes, the critter automatically inflicts damage as above; the target gets to resist each time as above. On the target's Action Phase, he may use a Complex Action to try to escape. To attempt escape, make an Opposed Test, rolling the target's Strength + Body against the critter's Magic + Body. If the target wins, she escapes and takes no more damage from the attack.

Some engulf powers have secondary effects; these are described here.

Air Engulf: The victim resists Stun as if from an inhalation-vector toxin attack (p. 408). Armor does not protect against this attack, but other protective gear might (**Toxin and Drug Protection Table**, p. 408). If the victim passes out from Stun damage, she continues to take damage, with the Stun damage overflowing into Physical damage as normal.

Earth Engulf: The target resists Physical damage.

Fire Engulf: The victim resists Fire damage (p. 171).

Water Engulf: The victim resists Stun damage. This is rougher than normal drowning, because the critter is capable of exerting great pressure on the victim. Victims who pass out from Stun damage continue to take damage after falling unconscious, with the Stun damage overflowing into Physical damage as normal.

ENHANCED SENSES

Type: P **Action**: Auto
Range: Self **Duration:** Always

This power includes any improved or augmented senses beyond the normal human range of awareness. This includes low-light and thermographic vision, improved hearing and smell, heat-sensing organs, natural sonar, and so on. The actual enhanced senses are specified it the critter's description. If the enhanced sense doesn't already have a specific effect (for example, thermographic vision), this power gives a +2 dice pool modifier to tests made using that enhanced sense, as well as +1 to the appropriate limit.

ESSENCE DRAIN

Type: P **Action:** Complex
Range: Touch **Duration:** Permanent

This power allows a critter to permanently take away another being's Essence and add it to its own. Essence Drain can only target physical, sapient beings (characters and non-astral critters with the Sapience power). The target must be sapient (or achieve sapience) on its own; attempts to use spirit pacts or other methods to imbue mundane critters with Sapience solely for use as a source of Essence do not work.

Essence can't be drained while the victim is actively, physically resisting. They must either be willing or subdued (restrained, paralyzed, mentally controlled, etc.). Essence transfer can only take place through a strong emotional connection, whether that emotion is passion, anger, or terror. The emotion must also be focused on the critter using the power. Abstract terror is not enough; the victim must be specifically terrified of his attacker in order for the attacker to drain the victim's Essence. Though there is often a transfer of living material involved in an Essence Drain attack (a vampire drinking his victim's blood, for instance), nothing but the emotional connection is actually required for this power to work.

Draining a point of Essence takes an Extended Charisma + Magic (10 - target's Essence, 1 minute) Test.

If the critter is disturbed or interrupted before this test ends, the Essence point is not drained. Lost Essence affects a target character's Magic or Resonance Rating (see **Essence**, p. 52). If a target character's Essence is drained to 0, the character dies.

A critter can only increase its Essence to twice its natural maximum. Any Essence drained beyond this point is lost; the critter's astral form can only hold so much at a time.

The psychic stimulus of the act of draining has the side effect of creating either agony or euphoria in the victim, depending upon the circumstances of the attack. Willing victims are most likely to feel a sensation of ecstasy, which could be addictive. A willing victim being drained must make a psychological Addiction Test (p. 413) with a threshold of 2.

A critter that drains Essence can pump their stolen life force into other attributes, including Magic, with a Simple Action. Every point of Essence spent may temporarily boost one Physical or Mental attribute, or Magic, by +1. Multiple points of Essence can be pumped into a single attribute if so desired, but only one point can be used per Simple Action. While more than one attribute may be boosted at a time (for example, Strength and Intuition can both be boosted at once), only one attribute may be so increased per Simple Action. The maximum boost an attribute can receive in this fashion is +4. This attribute boost wears off after 12 hours, and the Essence points used to fuel the boost are lost.

FEAR

Type: M **Action:** Complex
Range: LOS **Duration:** Special

This power gives a critter the power to fill its victims with overwhelming terror. The victim flees in panic and doesn't stop until he is safely away and out of the critter's sight. The critter makes an Opposed Test using its Willpower + Magic against the target's Willpower + Logic. The terror lasts for 1 Combat Turn per net hit scored by the critter. Even once the fear fades, the target must succeed in a Willpower + Logic (critter's net hits) Test to gather the nerve to face the critter again.

GUARD

Type: P **Action:** Complex
Range: LOS **Duration:** Sustained

This power allows the critter to protect against normal environmental accidents and hazards (both natural and those induced by the Accident power), such as preventing someone from succumbing to heatstroke or saving someone from drowning. The Guard power can also be used to prevent a glitch from occurring. Guard may be used on a number of characters at once equal to the critter's Magic attribute. Each accident averted or glitch prevented counts as a service if this power is used by a spirit.

HARDENED ARMOR

Type: P **Action:** Auto
Range: Self **Duration:** Always

There's Armor, and then there's *Armor*. This is the latter. This power provides its rating in Armor, and functions just like the Armor power. It differs from the Armor power as follows.

If the modified Damage Value of an attack is less than the Hardened Armor rating (modified by AP), the attack does no damage. Don't make a Damage Resistance test for the critter; it might not even notice the attack was made in the first place.

If the modified Damage Value of an attack is greater than the Hardened Armor rating (modified by AP), then perform a Damage Resistance test for the critter as normal. Additionally, half of the Hardened Armor rating (modified by AP, rounded up) counts as automatic extra hits on this test.

EXAMPLE

Cayman and his team have their hands full with a young dragon that has been sent to keep them from getting home. Cayman starts with his Ingram Smartgun, managing 1 net hit on his attack, which means 9P worth of damage is heading for the dragon. The dragon has Hardened Armor 8, and the Smartgun has no armor piercing, so all points of armor are in play. The incoming damage value is greater than than the armor value, so it needs to be resisted (if the dragon had Hardened Armor 10, the shot would have bounced harmlessly off its hide). The dragon has a Body of 8; added to its Hardened Armor 8, it has 16 dice to roll. The Hardened Armor gives it 4 automatic hits (8 / 2). He then rolls his 16 dice for the Damage Resistance Test and gets 4 more hits, for a total of 8 hits. That means of the 9 hits, 1 got through. The dragon marks 1 box—out of 12—on its Physical Condition Monitor. Cayman's got plenty of work left to do.

HARDENED MYSTIC ARMOR

Type: M **Action:** Auto
Range: Self **Duration:** Always

This power provides protection from attacks on the astral plane. Otherwise, it functions in the same way as Hardened Armor, above.

IMMUNITY

Type: P **Action:** Auto
Range: Self **Duration:** Always

A critter with Immunity has an enhanced resistance

to a certain type of attack or affliction. Effectively, the critter has a Hardened Armor rating equal to twice its Essence against that particular kind of damage (see **Hardened Armor**, p. 397). This means that if the modified Damage Value of the attack does not exceed the Immunity's rating, then the attack automatically does no damage. If the modified DV exceeds the Immunity rating, perform a Damage Resistance test as normal, adding the Immunity rating to the dice pool for this test. Additionally, half (rounded up) of the Immunity rating counts as automatic hits on this test.

Some Immunities function slightly differently, because the attack they protect against doesn't do damage, *per se*.

Immunity to Age: Some things don't get old. Literally. Beings with this Immunity neither age nor suffer the effects of aging.

Immunity to Normal Weapons: This applies to all attacks that are not magical in nature; weapon foci, spells, and adept or critter powers function normally. If the critter also has the Allergy weakness, then the Immunity does not apply against non-magical attacks made using the allergen.

INFECTION

Type: P **Action:** Auto
Range: Touch **Duration:** Permanent

This power is the vector by which the human-metahuman vampiric virus (HMHVV) is transmitted. When a critter with this power uses Essence Drain to reduce the victim's Essence to 0, this power attempts to pass the critter's own infection on to the victim. To see if the victim is infected, make an Opposed Test of the critter's Magic + Charisma against the victim's Body + Willpower. If the critter wins, the victim is infected and enters a coma-like state as the virus reshapes the victim physically, mentally, and spiritually. Twenty-four hours later, the victim rises as a new Infected critter (as determined by its original metaspecies) with a single point of Essence and an insatiable, bestial hunger for more. The new Infected critter must drain Essence from another being immediately.

Player characters transformed through the Infection power automatically become NPCs upon their "death" and are controlled by the gamemaster from that point forward.

INFLUENCE

Type: M **Action:** Complex
Range: LOS **Duration:** Instant

This power gives the critter the ability to exert its own will on a target character. It implants a suggestion in the target's mind. Make an Opposed Test using the critter's Magic + Charisma against the target's Willpower + Logic. If the critter succeeds, its target acts on the suggestion as if it was his own idea.

If the target is confronted with the wrongness of the suggestion, the subject can make a Willpower Test to overcome it, the same way that mental manipulation spells can be overcome (p. 292).

INNATE SPELL

Type: As spell **Action:** Complex
Range: As spell **Duration:** As spell

This power allows the critter to instinctively cast a single, specific spell. To use this power effectively, the critter has to have the Spellcasting skill. Innate Spells are chosen from the list of spells cast by magicians, and magicians can oppose them with the Counterspelling skill as normal. Innate Spells also produce Drain as normal, and suffer a –2 penalty for sustaining. Critters and Spirits resist Drain with either Intuition or Charisma, at the gamemaster's discretion.

MATERIALIZATION

Type: M **Action:** Complex
Range: Self **Duration:** Sustained

Magicians and many critters can leave their bodies and project themselves into the astral plane. Likewise, many astral critters can project themselves into the physical world and form a temporary "body" to inhabit while they're here. This lets them interact with, and affect, physical beings. Additionally, they gain Immunity to Normal Weapons while materialized. Materializing and dematerializing to return to the astral plane both require a Complex Action.

MIMICRY

Type: P **Action:** Simple
Range: Self **Duration:** Sustained

This power allows a critter to exactly imitate sounds, including speech and the hunting calls of other creatures to which the mimicking critter has been exposed. If mimicking something from memory instead of recent exposure, the critter needs to roll a Memory Test (p. 152). Noticing that the mimicked sound is false requires a Perception Test; the threshold of this test is determined by the number of hits scored by the critter with a Charisma + Magic Test.

MIST FORM

Type: P **Action:** Complex
Range: Self **Duration:** Sustained

This power allows the critter to transform itself into a cloud of mist. Shifting into or out of mist form is a Complex Action. When shifting into mist form, the critter transforms itself and any bonded foci it is carrying, active or not.

The mist form has a movement rate of 5 meters per Combat Turn; the critter can control some of its movement in this form, though it is susceptible to strong winds. These can push or disrupt the mist, which can temporarily disorient the critter. The mist form can pass

through any cracks or crevices that aren't airtight. Systems that defend against gases, bacteria, or viral infiltration also stop a critter in mist form.

While in mist form, the critter has Immunity to Normal Weapons. If the being is exposed to a substance to which it is allergic, it is immediately forced back into its normal form. While in mist form, the critter can perceive normally but cannot use any of its other powers until it resumes its normal form.

MOVEMENT

Type: P **Action:** Complex
Range: LOS **Duration:** Sustained

This power allows the critter to speed up or slow down the target's movement rate. The power only works on things that are predisposed to locomotion: vehicles, characters, or critters. If used on targets other than the critter, it also only functions in terrain that the critter controls. If used only on the critter itself, this power can be used anywhere. The critter can multiply or divide the target's movement rate by up to its Magic attribute.

Only one instance of this power may be applied to a particular target at any one time. Once the target has left the critter's terrain/domain, the power ends and the target's movement is returned to normal.

Using Movement on vehicles is tougher than it is on critters and characters. If the target is a vehicle, the critter makes a Magic + Willpower test with a threshold of half the vehicle's Body (round up), with a minimum of 2. If the critter meets the threshold in this test, multiply the hits by the vehicle's Acceleration Rating and add the result to (or subtract it from) the vehicle's Speed in the next Combat Turn, as if making an Acceleration or Deceleration Test. The critter can continue to make Magic + Willpower Tests to increase or decrease the vehicle's speed each Combat Turn that it sustains this power and the vehicle remains in its domain/terrain. Based on the situation, these sudden changes in speed may call for **Crash Tests** (p. 201) for the vehicle

MYSTIC ARMOR

Type: M **Action:** Auto
Range: Self **Duration:** Always

This power functions in the same way as Armor, except that it only provides protection from attacks on the astral plane.

NATURAL WEAPON

Type: P **Action:** Auto
Range: Touch **Duration:** Instant

Claws. Sharp, pointy teeth. A spiked tail. Whatever form it takes, the critter possesses some means of inflicting Physical damage. The description of this power describes the nature of the attack, as well as its Damage Value and Armor Penetration modifiers where applicable. Natural weapons may be either melee or ranged attacks, and critters follow standard combat rules when using them. Critters use the Unarmed Combat skill to attack with natural melee weapons, and the Exotic Ranged Weapon skill to attack with natural ranged weapons. Most natural weapons are considered normal weapons for purposes of the Immunity to Normal Weapons power; exceptions are noted in individual critter descriptions.

A dual-natured critter with a melee Natural Weapon can use this power against astral targets that are within its reach. Use the critter's normal Unarmed Combat skill and physical Damage Value for this attack. Ranged Natural Weapons, like other ranged combat, do not work on the astral plane.

Critters without a Natural Weapon may still make an unarmed attack. As with regular characters, the Damage Value is (STR)S.

NOXIOUS BREATH

Type: P **Action:** Complex
Range: Special **Duration:** Instant

A lot of critters have bad breath—this one's breath is actually toxic. The critter with this power can incapacitate targets with a nauseating stench. This is treated as a ranged attack using the critter's Exotic Ranged Weapon skill + Agility [Physical]. The damage is a toxin attack with an inhalation vector (Speed: Immediate, Power: critter's Magic, Effect: Stun damage, nausea; see p. 409). Armor is useless, but respiratory protection will help guard the target (see the **Toxin and Drug Protection Table**, p. 408).

This blast of breath extends in a cone out to (Body) meters and can catch up to two targets who are within one meter of each other.

PARALYZING HOWL

Type: P **Action:** Complex
Range: Special **Duration:** Special

This power affects everyone who hears it, be they friend or foe, within a radius of (Magic x 15) meters. The critter makes an Opposed Test using its Magic + Charisma against the target's Intuition + Willpower. The rating of any area-effect sound-dampening devices, personal sound-dampening devices (such as cyberware), or hits scored by Hush or Silence spells, is added to the target's Opposed Test. If the target wins, he suffers no ill effects.

If the critter wins, the target's Reaction and Agility are both reduced by 1 for every net hit the creature scores; the reduction in Reaction affects the target's Initiative and Initiative Score. This effect lasts for (Magic + net hits) Combat Turns. If either Agility or Reaction drop to zero, the target is paralyzed for (Magic + net hits) minutes and can take no actions except to breathe. After either effect ends, the target's Reaction and Agility each return at the rate of 1 point per minute.

PARALYZING TOUCH

Type: P **Action:** Complex
Range: Touch **Duration:** Special

This is the Touch-range version of the Paralyzing Howl power. The critter must touch the target; if the target is surprised or otherwise unaware of the critter, this is automatic. If the target is aware of the critter, treat this as a Melee Attack that causes no damage. The Opposed Test to paralyze a target is the critter's Magic + Agility against the target's Intuition + Willpower. Otherwise, this power functions the same way as Paralyzing Howl.

PETRIFICATION

Type: P **Action:** Complex
Range: LOS **Duration:** Sustained

Some critters petrify you with fear. Critters with this power can do it literally. Perform an Opposed Test using the critter's Magic + Willpower against the target's Intuition + Willpower. If the target wins, he suffers no ill effects.

If the critter wins, the target's Agility and Reaction are both reduced by 1 for each net hit the critter scores; this reduction also affects the target's Initiative and Initiative Score. This effect lasts as long as the critter sustains the power. After this effect ends, the target's Reaction and Agility return at the rate of 1 point each per minute.

If either Agility or Reaction drop to 0, the target is transformed into a stone statue. He remains a statue for as long as the critter sustains the power; once the power is dropped, the target resumes his normal state and regains Reaction and Agility each at the rate of 1 per minute.

While transformed, the victim is unaware of his surroundings and events happening around him. He has a Barrier Rating equal to the critter's Magic x 2.

PSYCHOKINESIS

Type: P **Action:** Complex
Range: LOS **Duration:** Sustained

This power enables a critter to move an object with his mind. It's similar to the Magic Fingers spell (p. 294), acting as a magical "hand" with Strength and Agility equal to the number of hits scored on a Magic + Willpower Test.

REGENERATION

Type: P **Action:** Auto
Range: Self **Duration:** Always

This power allows rapid healing of any damage a critter has taken. At the end of each Combat Turn, if the critter has any damage on either of its Condition Monitors, it makes a Magic + Body Test, adds its Body to the number of hits scored, and heals that many boxes of damage, first from Physical overflow, then from the Physical damage monitor, and finally from the Stun damage monitor. If the critter has exceeded its Physical overflow damage, it's not dead yet. It still gets a Regeneration Test. If, after this test, its Physical overflow still exceeds its Body, then it's really dead.

Regeneration can't heal everything. Damage to the brain or spinal cord (for example, a called shot to the head) can't be healed this way. Magical damage from weapon foci, combat spells, most critter or adept powers, or Drain likewise can't be healed by Regeneration. If the critter is damaged by something it has an Allergy to, it can heal that damage with Regeneration, but can't make the Regeneration Test as long as it's in contact with the allergen.

Regeneration is incompatible with augmentations. Critters with Regeneration cannot receive augmentations; surgical incisions close too quickly to perform the implantation. Critters with augmentations who gain this power will reject their augmentations as the power repairs the existing genetic template.

SAPIENCE

Type: P **Action:** Auto
Range: Self **Duration:** Always

Sapient critters are self-aware, capable of making their own choices, and are generally at or above the level of *Homo sapiens*. While most critters are considered Unaware (see p. 131) of any skill they don't possess, sapient critters are merely Untrained (see p. 131) and can default normally. They are also capable of learning new skills if they so choose.

Most sapient critters are mundane, but they are capable of Awakening and possessing a Magic attribute. Awakened sapient critters are capable of learning any magical task they set their minds to, and follow the same rules for magic as normal characters. While no sapient critters are known to have Emerged as technomancers, the appearance of "technocritters" has led many scientists to believe that it's only a matter of time—if it hasn't already happened.

SEARCH

Type: P **Action:** Complex
Range: Special **Duration:** Special

Seek, and ye shall find, but it goes a lot faster with this power. To find a target, the critter makes a Magic + Intuition (5, 10 minutes) Extended Test. Lots of things can make this harder; apply the appropriate modifiers from the Search Modifiers Table.

The critter must have seen the thing it's searching for at some time before the search begins. Spirits may search for anything for which their summoner can provide them a mental image. Critters who can enter astral space may use this power there and do not have to materialize while searching, even if the target is in the physical world.

SEARCH MODIFIERS TABLE

SITUATION	THRESHOLD MODIFIERS
Target is more than a kilometer away	+kilometers
Target is a nonliving object or place	+5
SITUATION	**DICE POOL MODIFIERS**
Target hidden by Concealment power	–concealer's Magic
Target hidden behind mana barrier	–barrier Force

VENOM

Type: P **Action:** Auto
Range: Touch **Duration:** Instant

The critter secretes a toxin (see p. 408) that is dangerous and harmful to others. Typically, the attributes for this poison are Vector: Injection, Speed: 1 Combat Turn, Penetration: 0, Power: Magic, Effect: Physical damage. Some critters may have venoms with different attributes—these will be noted in their individual descriptions.

WEATHER CONTROL

Type: P **Action:** Complex
Range: LOS **Duration:** Sustained

This allows a critter to manipulate, within reason, certain local weather conditions. The desired weather must be realistically possible in the environment, which means no snow storms in equatorial Africa, for instance. It builds up over time, reaching its peak when the critter completes a Magic + Willpower (10, 30 minutes) Extended Test. In spite of the power's name, the critter doesn't actually control the weather; it only summons it and pushes it in the desired direction. A critter can summon a thunderstorm, for instance, but can't aim the lightning bolts.

WEAKNESSES

Not all things metaphysical are helpful to a critter. Here are some of the weaknesses the creatures of the Awakened World can suffer.

ALLERGY

Like characters, many critters suffer allergies to particular substances or conditions. Treat this weakness as the Allergy negative quality (p. 78).

DIETARY REQUIREMENT

Everybody's got to eat. Critters with this weakness have to include something strange or exotic in their diets. Typical examples include toxic waste, petroleum, gold, or metahuman flesh. Unless specified in the critter's description, it needs at least one meal per day, appropriate to its size and metabolism. Unless it gets the specified requirement in its diet, the critter will eventually grow sick and die.

ESSENCE LOSS

Certain critters, most notably the Infected, have no actual Essence of their own; they exist by stealing Essence from other beings. Not only do they not have their own Essence, they slowly lose any Essence they've stolen, at the rate of 1 point of Essence every lunar month. Losing Essence also means that a critter's Magic might be affected (see p. 278).

If the critter is reduced to an Essence score of 0, it's living on borrowed time. It will die a very unpleasant death in Body + Willpower days unless it feeds and replenishes its Essence. Such a critter is a starving predator in search of prey for sustenance, and as such is extraordinarily dangerous.

Certain powers of the HMHVV Infected accelerate Essence Loss. Any power that is not automatic (meaning it requires an action to use) is Essence-intensive for the Infected. Each use of these powers accelerates the loss of Essence by one week.

INDUCED DORMANCY

Some condition or substance can force some critters into a coma-like state of suspended animation. The condition can be a lack of air, for example, or a certain rare substance such as orichalcum. The length of exposure needed to cause the critter to become dormant varies and is mentioned in the critter's description. The critter will awaken quickly, usually within a minute, once the condition or substance is removed.

REDUCED SENSES

Any or all of the critter's five basic senses may be limited in effectiveness. Typically, reduced senses function at half the normal range or effectiveness, but they might be reduced even further, possibly to the point of the complete loss of that sense.

UNEDUCATED

Treat this weakness as the Uneducated Negative quality (p. 87).

VULNERABILITY

Some critters have an Achilles' heel, something that hurts them more than other things, or against which they have no defense. Sometimes it's a substance. This substance, be it wood or gold or ferrocrete, causes additional damage when used as a weapon against the critter. Increase the Damage Value of all attacks with

the substance by 3. Weapons made of something the critter is vulnerable to bypass any Immunities it might have. Damage taken from the substance to which a critter is vulnerable can't be healed by Regeneration or healing magic, only by natural healing.

Some Vulnerabilities are conditions, not substances. For instance, a basilisk is vulnerable to its own Petrification power. In such cases, a -3 dice pool modifier is applied to the critter's Resistance Test to avoid the condition.

CRITTER COMBAT

Critters, in spite of what the trids and sims want you to think, are not *all* marauding killing machines, though enough of them are that you should probably always approach them with caution. Especially if you don't know what the frag they are. Most critters, especially those without any combat skills, attempt to run away when confronted. If they can't flee, though, critters fight until they see an opportunity for escape, which they take as soon as they possibly can.

Some critters are natural predators; others are trained for security duty. These critters have combat skills and will fight much more readily than normal critters. If they feel they have an advantage, or if given a command by their trainers, they'll initiate combat. If they sense their advantage dwindling, or they don't have one to start with, they'll fight in self-defense and withdraw at the first opportunity. Back a predator into a corner, however, and they'll launch into an all-out attack that will leave either it or its foe a corpse.

Critter combat is basically the same as that for normal characters. They roll attribute + attack skill and follow the same rules as characters. They also use the regular defaulting rules if they attempt an action for which they have no skill.

MUNDANE CRITTERS

Most of the animal kingdom was unaffected by the Awakening. Following are some normal, everyday critters that your shadowrunners might encounter on a dark night.

DOG

They're still man's best friend. Their loyalty, enhanced senses, and natural instincts make them naturals in security and personal protection settings. The statistics listed here represent a typical specimen of an average dog used in security, such as the German shepherd, Rottweiler, and Doberman Pinscher.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	E	ESS
4	3	4	4	3	3	4	3	3	6

Initiative	8 + 1D6
Movement	x2/x8/+4
Condition Monitor	10/10
Limits	Physical 6, Mental 4, Social 5
Armor	0
Skills	Intimidation 4, Perception (Smell) 5 (+2), Running 5, Tracking 6, Unarmed Combat 5
Powers	Enhanced Senses (Hearing, Smell), Natural Weapon (Claws/Bite: DV (STR+1)P, AP —)

GREAT CAT

The term "great cat" refers to any large wild cat around the world, including lions, tigers, panthers, and pumas.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	E	ESS
6	5	4	5	3	3	4	3	3	6

Initiative	8 + 2D6
Movement	x2/x6/+4
Condition Monitor	11/10
Limits	Physical 7, Mental 4, Social 5
Armor	0
Skills	Perception 5, Running 5, Sneaking 6, Tracking 4, Unarmed Combat 7
Powers	Natural Weapon (Claws/Bite: DV (STR+3)P, AP –1)

HORSE

Horses have served as mounts, beasts of burden, and companions to metahumanity for centuries. They rival dogs for the role of man's best friend. Herds of wild horses have been growing in the wild over the past several years.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	E	ESS
6	5	5	6	3	2	3	4	2	6

Initiative	8 + 1D6
Movement	x3/x10/+6
Condition Monitor	12/10
Limits	Physical 10, Mental 4, Social 6
Armor	0
Skills	Running 6, Unarmed Combat 1
Powers	Natural Weapon (Kick: DV (STR+1)P, AP —, Reach 1)

SHARK

While considered the most feared predators of the oceans, most sharks aren't aggressive and will back down from a legitimate threat. The smallest sign of weakness or the faintest smell of blood in the water, however, drives most sharks into a killing frenzy. The following statistics are common for bull sharks; tiger and great white sharks are much larger and deadlier.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	E	ESS
5	4	3	5	3	1	4	1	3	6

Initiative	9 + 1D6
Movement	x3/x8/+4
Condition Monitor	11/10
Limits	Physical 7, Mental 3, Social 4
Armor	2
Skills	Perception (Smell) 6 (+2), Swimming 10, Unarmed Combat 8
Powers	Armor 2, Natural Weapon (Bite: DV (STR+2) P, AP –2)

WOLF

Wolves are rarely seen in the urban blight of the sprawl, but packs of them still roam the wilds of the Native American Nations. These packs are growing in number and in size. Wolves hunt in smaller packs of two to six, usually led by a stronger and tougher alpha male. In some cases, the alpha male may actually be a wolf shapeshifter.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	E	ESS
6	3	5	6	3	2	4	3	3	6

Initiative	9 + 2D6
Movement	x2/x8/+4
Condition Monitor	10/10
Limits	Physical 6, Mental 4, Social 5
Armor	0
Skills	Perception (Smell) 5 (+2), Running 5, Sneaking 5, Tracking 6, Unarmed Combat 7
Powers	Enhanced Senses (Hearing, Smell), Natural Weapon (Claws/Bite: DV (STR+2)P, AP –1)

PARACRITTERS

BARGHEST

The barghest is a metaspecies of the English mastiff, standing about 85 centimeters at the shoulder and weighing approximately 170 kilograms. Its short, sleek fur is either pure white or pure black, and it lies flat on its massively muscled body, creating the illusion of a naked hide. Sharp spines protrude along the length of its back. Its eyes shine red, and its teeth glow slightly in the dark because of luminescent bacteria in its saliva. During their breeding season, they hunt alone or in pairs; at other times they hunt in packs of twelve or more. A number of corps have attempted to use barghests as guard animals, with mixed results.

Natural Habitat/Range: Urban areas in North America and northern Europe, particularly the British Isles. Barghests have also turned up in Australia, Hong Kong, and Nairobi.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	E	ESS	M
8	5	6	6	4	2	5	5	4	6	5

Initiative	11 + 2D6
Movement	x2/x6/+4
Condition Monitor	12/10
Limits	Physical 9, Mental 5, Social 7
Armor	3
Skills	Intimidation 7, Perception 6, Running 5, Tracking 6, Unarmed Combat 8
Powers	Armor 3, Dual Natured, Enhanced Senses (Hearing, Smell, Sonar), Fear, Immunity (Barghest Howls), Natural Weapon (Bite: DV (STR+2)P, AP –1), Paralyzing Howl

BASILISK

A metaspecies of the komodo dragon, the basilisk averages approximately 250 centimeters from its snout to the tip of its tail, and weighing around one hundred kilograms. They stand about twenty centimeters at the shoulder, are somewhat broader than their progenitor, and have a spiny dorsal fan, about thirty centimeters in height at its tallest point, running most of their length. Their scales are heavy; coloration is black and bright yellow, with a solid black snout and tail tip. Their maws are filled with sharp, saw-edged teeth that are constantly replaced as they're lost. Not surprisingly, they're aggressively carnivorous, typically feeding on fish and small mammals. They cheerfully glut themselves on anything they can catch, though, up to and including metahumans.

Extremely territorial, they are relatively easy to train and are used extensively as guard animals by a number of megacorps throughout the Sixth World.

Natural Habitat/Range: Native to Indonesia, basilisks can now be found in temperate and tropical wood-

lands worldwide. Powerful swimmers, their natural lairs are always near running water.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	E	ESS	M
4	3	3	7	5	1	3	1	1	6	4

Initiative	6 + 1D6
Movement	x1/x5/+1 (x2/x8/+2 swimming)
Condition Monitor	11/11
Limits	Physical 8, Mental 4, Social 5
Armor	7
Skills	Infiltrating 3, Perception 4, Running 2, Sneaking 3, Swimming 8, Unarmed Combat 6
Powers	Armor 7, Natural Weapon (Bite, Reach —, DV 8P, AP –2), Petrification
Weaknesses	Vulnerability (Own Gaze)

COCKATRICE

Even though it's a metaspecies of the chicken, the cockatrice more resembles an emu with a chicken's head and a long blue tail. Standing two meters in height and weighting approximately 105 kilograms, the cockatrice has long blue legs, yellow plumage, a bright red comb on its head, and a sharp, horny beak. They are predatory and carnivorous, often hunting in groups. They hunt by chasing their prey, leaping into the air, and attacking with their tails. Their prey thus paralyzed, cockatrices can use their talons to tear them apart and dine at their leisure. They are not at all choosy about their diet and will take on just about anything up to the size of an ork if it looks like it might be tasty.

Cockatrices are popular security critters for many corps around the world. Guard specimens are typically imprinted from hatching onto their handlers, of whom they become extremely protective.

Natural Habitat/Range: Originally found in open grassland and scrubland in western Europe, the cockatrice can now be found worldwide in a variety of environments.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	E	ESS	M
4	5	4	4	4	2	3	1	1	6	5

Initiative	7 + 1D6
Movement	x2/x8/+3
Condition Monitor	10/10
Limits	Physical 6, Mental 4, Social 4
Armor	1
Skills	Perception 3, Running 7, Sneaking 5, Unarmed Combat 7
Powers	Armor 1, Immunity (Own Touch), Natural Weapon (Claws: DV (STR)P, AP –1), Paralyzing Touch (Tail)

DEVIL RAT

The devil rat is completely hairless and measures approximately a meter in length, including its tail. They weigh in somewhere between three and four kilograms. Devil rats are nocturnal pack hunters; it's not unusual for hunting packs of thirty or more mature individuals to make their way through the alleys and sewers they call home. Larger packs have been observed. They are fearless and vicious; some say they're actively evil. Typically seeking out small animals to feed on, they are not afraid to take on a metahuman if they sense weakness.

They breed prolifically, and combined with their natural immunity to most poisons, this makes them all but impossible to exterminate.

Natural Habitat: Urban areas worldwide.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	E	ESS	M
2	5	5	1	3	2	5	5	2	6	4

Initiative	10 + 1D6
Movement	x1/x2/+1
Condition Monitor	9/10
Limits	Physical 3, Mental 4, Social 7
Armor	0
Skills	Climbing 5, Perception 4, Running 2, Sneaking 6, Unarmed Combat 5
Powers	Animal Control (Ordinary Rats), Concealment (Self Only), Immunity (Toxins), Natural Weapon (Bite: DV (STR+1)P, AP —, –1 Reach)
Weaknesses	Allergy (Sunlight, Mild)

GHOUL

Objects of fear or pity, and often both, ghouls are metahumans infected with the virulent Krieger strain of HMHVV, the human-metahuman vampiric virus. The disease causes extreme changes in the victim's body. He loses all body hair, and the skin becomes a grayish-tinted, scabrous hide. The fingers grow elongated, and the nails harden into sharp claws. The teeth become longer and sharper, and the eyes film over, leaving featureless white orbs glaring out of their sockets. The disease also wreaks havoc on the victim's intellect, leaving many ghouls mindless, vicious eating machines. Most ghouls retain much of their personality and intellect, but even these are generally traumatized and changed from their pre-Krieger state.

They are ostracized from "normal" society because of the diet they're forced to subsist on. Ghouls must eat raw meat to survive, and a significant portion of that must be in the form of raw metahuman flesh. While they often scavenge their food from graveyards and organlegging chopshops, they're not above hunting. When they hunt, they usually do so in packs of six to twenty individuals. They live in isolated areas, away from prying eyes but close enough to a metahuman population for them to feed.

Natural Habitat/Range: Settled areas worldwide.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	E	ESS	M
7	3	5	6	5	2	4	1	2	1	1

Initiative	9 + 1D6
Movement	As base metatype
Condition Monitor	12/11
Limits	Physical 8, Mental 5, Social 5
Armor	1
Skills	Assensing 4, Perception 5, Running 3, Sneaking 6, Unarmed Combat 6
Powers	Armor 1, Dual Natured, Enhanced Senses (Hearing, Smell), Natural Weapon (Claws: DV (STR+1)P, AP –1), Sapience
Weaknesses	Allergy (Sunlight, Moderate), Dietary Requirement (Metahuman Flesh), Reduced Senses (Blind)
Notes	Statistics given are for a standard human ghoul who's retained most of his intellect; for other metaspecies, use the Metatype Attribute Modifiers table (see p. 66) as appropriate and recalculate the ghoul's Condition Monitors and Limits. Some ghouls may have the Adept, Magician, or Mystic Adept qualities.

HELL HOUND

The hell hound is a metaspecies of the German shepherd dog, standing about ninety centimeters at the shoulder and weighing in at about 145 kilograms. Their coats are as black as coal, and their eyes are red-rimmed. They are pack-hunting predators, typically hunting small game up to the size of a deer, though they're not above scavenging if the situation calls for it. They're also not afraid of going after larger animals, sometimes including metahumans, if they have the numbers. They're popular as security animals, especially in isolated facilities in rural areas.

Natural Habitat/Range: Primarily woodland areas of North America, but anywhere domesticated dogs are present.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	E	ESS	M
6	4	5	6	4	2	4	2	2	1	5

Initiative	10 + 3D6
Movement	x2/x6/+4
Condition Monitor	11/10
Limits	Physical 8, Mental 4, Social 6
Armor	2
Skills	Exotic Ranged Weapon 4, Intimidation 3, Perception 3, Running 4, Sneaking 5, Tracking 5, Unarmed Combat 3
Powers	Armor 2, Dual Natured, Elemental Attack (Fire), Enhanced Senses (Hearing, Low-Light Vision, Smell), Fear, Immunity to Fire, Natural Weapon (Bite: DV (STR+1)P, AP –1)

SASQUATCH

Once known colloquially as Bigfoot, the sasquatch is an enormous humanoid standing approximately 280 centimeters in height and weighing about 475 kilograms. Their bodies are covered in long fur, typically black or dark brown, though older individuals often show significant graying. Sasquatches are peaceful creatures with enormous curiosity; while they will fight, they only do so when attacked. In 2042, they were recognized as a sapient species by the United Nations. Many sasquatches have, since that time, begun to migrate from the forests into the nearby cities. Their natural ability to mimic sounds affords a handful of them a very comfortable living in the entertainment industry.

Natural Habitat/Range: Mountainous regions in the northern reaches of both North America and Asia. Sasquatches can also be found in the Himalayan mountain ranges, where they are called yeti. Yeti have white fur but are otherwise identical to sasquatches.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	E	ESS	M
6	3	4	7	3	3	5	3	4	6	4

Initiative	9 + 1D6
Movement	x2/x4/+2
Condition Monitor	12/10
Limits	Physical 9, Mental 5, Social 5
Armor	0
Skills	Assensing 6, Animal Calls (Professional Knowledge) 8, Artisan 6, Athletics skill group 3, Perception 6, Sneaking 8
Powers	Dual Natured, Mimicry, Sapience
Notes	Sasquatches have +1 Reach. Some sasquatches may have the Adept, Magician, or Mystic Adept qualities.

VAMPIRE

Human victims of HMHVV, vampires prey on other metahumans, drinking their blood and sucking out their Essence in order to survive. Unlike many of the Infected, vampires can usually restrain their hungers if they choose to do so. Some try to be "civilized;" they refuse to drain either blood or Essence from an unwilling victim. Others thrive on the hunt, reveling in the role of monster.

Vampires must consume metahuman blood in order to survive, in addition to the Essence they consume from their victims. In fact, they can't consume anything *but* blood; they become physically sick within an hour if they consume anything else, and the less said about their reaction to alcohol, the better (treat as **Nausea**, p. 409).

The majority of vampires are magically active; the transformation often unlocks hidden magical potential. These vampires can learn magic just like humans. Some of the more outlandish tales of vampiric powers, such as the ability to change into animals or control the minds of their victims, might have been the result of an extremely rare vampire sorcerer in the Fifth World.

Natural Habitat/Range: Worldwide, wherever there are human populations to feed on.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	E	ESS	M
4	3	5	4	4	3	4	5	3	2[6]	4

Initiative	9 + 2D6
Movement	x3/x5/+3
Condition Monitor	10/10
Limits	Physical 6, Mental 5, Social 5-9 (depending on Essence)
Armor	0
Skills	Perception 5, Running 4, Sneaking 6,, Unarmed Combat 5
Powers	Dual Natured, Enhanced Senses (Hearing, Smell, Thermographic Vision), Essence Drain, Immunity (Age, Pathogens, Toxins), Infection, Mist Form, Natural Weapon (Bite: DV (STR+1)P, AP –1, –1 Reach), Regeneration, Sapience
Weaknesses	Allergy (Sunlight, Severe), Allergy (Wood, Severe), Dietary Requirement (Metahuman Blood), Essence Loss, Induced Dormancy (Lack of Air, (Essence) Minutes)
Notes	Some vampires may have the Adept, Magician, or Mystic Adept qualities. They always have a Magic rating, whether they are magically active or not; their starting Magic is equal to 6 or their Essence, whichever is lower. Vampires can consume only blood, and they suffer Nausea (p. 409) within an hour when they consume anything else. Vampires have less buoyancy than humans and receive a –4 dice pool modifier to all swimming-related tests. Damage taken due to their Allergy to Sunlight cannot be healed with Regeneration, even after they are no longer being exposed. Normal and magical healing still work.

DRACOFORMS

Dracoforms is a fancy word for dragons—enormous, magical reptilian creatures straight out of the myths and legends of humankind. They are intelligent, devious, and virtually immortal, which affords them the opportunity to make elaborate plans with multiple contingency options and to take the (very) long view on just about any subject. Most dragons are solitary creatures who avoid unnecessary contact with the "younger races," as they call them. Many dragons, though, have been taking more public roles in the Sixth World in recent years. This may or may not work out well for metahumanity.

What we know about dragons is limited but has grown substantially over the years. Those things that we do know come mostly from interviews conducted by the great drag-

on Dunkelzahn; more information came in 2064 when the government of Aztlan executed the feathered serpent Dzitbalchén and released the autopsy results on the Matrix.

Because of their unique natures, dragons should always be considered Prime Runner characters (see p. 385), and generally rate as Superhuman Prime Runners, if not higher.

All dragons have exhibited certain powers which seem to be common to all varieties of their kind. Additionally, individual specimens have exhibited further powers that are not universal to dragonkind.

All dragons are capable and powerful magicians, practitioners of a magical tradition that predates metahumanity. There are no known dragon adepts, though that should not be taken to mean that such a thing is impossible. The Magic attribute shown *does not* include any increases due to initiation; it would be foolish to believe that any dragon isn't at least a mid-level initiate.

Note that the skill levels in this list are average for a typical adult dragon. Individual specimens might exhibit higher or lower scores in any particular skill. This is also not an exhaustive list of any dragon's skills.

Common Skills: Assensing 14, Conjuring skill group 12, Exotic Ranged Weapon 12, Flight 12, Perception 12, Running 10, Sorcery skill group 14, Unarmed Combat 12

Common Powers: Dragonspeech, Dual Natured, Elemental Attack (usually Fire), Enhanced Senses (Smell, Low-Light Vision, Thermographic Vision, Wide-Band Hearing), Hardened Armor (BOD), Hardened Mystic Armor (WIL), Natural Weapon (Bite/Claws: DV (STR+2) P, AP –4), Sapience

Individual Powers: Animal Control, Compulsion, Corrosive Saliva, Fear, Influence, Noxious Breath, Venom

Notes: All dragons have the Magician quality and know most spells. They also have +2 Reach.

EASTERN DRAGONS

Eastern dragons are native to eastern Asia. An eastern dragon is approximately 30 meters long from nose to tail, and it stands approximately two meters high at the shoulder. They are colorful and serpentine. Their heads are broad and adorned with a chinful of whiskers that extends to the rear portions of the skull. They also have multiple pairs of horns rising from behind their eyes, and a pair of barbules descends from beneath the pronounced nasal region.

Their bodies are covered in scaly armor; a spiny fan runs the length of its back and down the tail. The highly dexterous paws are four-fingered (though some variants may possess three or five fingers per paw), with each digit ending in a large claw. The most common pattern of eastern dragon coloration is iridescent green with golden whiskers and belly scutes, but various other color patterns have appeared.

Sirrush: The sirrush is indigenous to Asia Minor and appears similar to the eastern dragon. It has longer limbs than the eastern dragon, though, and it's a bit shorter at twenty-five meters in length. The difference in average length is almost entirely due to the much shorter tail of the sirrush. It also has a longer, narrower head without the whiskers and barbules of its eastern cousin. A sirrush isn't as colorful as the eastern dragon, either; its scales tend to be in earth tones of brown, grey, gold, and terra cotta. In terms of game statistics, however, a sirrush is identical to an eastern dragon.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	E	ESS	M
17	8	8	32	9	10	3	3	8	10	10

Initiative	16 + 2D6
Movement	x2/x4/+4 (x3/x7/+6 flight)
Condition Monitor	17/13
Limits	Physical 32, Mental 13, Social 13
Armor (Phys/Myst)	17H/9H

FEATHERED SERPENT

Feathered serpents figure prominently in the myths of South and Central America. They also appear in portions of Africa. As the name implies, they're long and serpentine, averaging about twenty meters in length, and they have two pairs of limbs, their wings and a pair of legs. While their bellies are scaled, most of their body is covered in feathers. These contour feathers, as well as their prominent ruffs and wings, display a rainbow of colors.

Their wings have a span of between fifteen and eighteen meters. Their rear legs end in paws with five digits, one of these an opposable thumb. They can easily manipulate objects with these if they so desire. Feathered serpents, more than other kinds of dragons, frequently have a tail stinger or fangs with potent venom.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	E	ESS	M
13	9	10	30	10	9	5	3	8	10	10

Initiative	19 + 3D6
Movement	x3/x5/+5 (x4/x8/+7 flight)
Condition Monitor	16/13
Limits	Physical 29, Mental 13, Social 12
Armor (Phys/Myst)	15H/10H

WESTERN DRAGON

Western dragons come from Europe and western Asia. The largest of the dragon species, they're over thirty-seven meters in length, three meters or so high at the shoulder, and have a wingspan of approximately thirty meters. They have four legs in addition to their wings; the rear paws are adapted into feet, though the forepaws have opposable thumbs and can manipulate ob-

jects easily. Dorsal spines or fans are present in some, but not all, specimens.

Western dragons are usually a single color, though they exhibit darker shades along the spine and paler shades on the belly. All western dragons have heavy scales; some also have bony plates acting as additional armor.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	E	ESS	M
18	7	8	40	5	5	5	5	6	10	10

Initiative	16 + 2D6
Movement	x2/x4/+4 (x3/x7/+5 flight)
Condition Monitor	17/12
Limits	Physical 36, Mental 11, Social 12
Armor (Phys/Myst)	18H/8H

TOXINS, DRUGS, AND BTLS

The Sixth World is a vicious place; it seems like something is always trying to do you harm. It's not always a physical weapon, either. Sometimes it's a fragging molecule or simsense program. Toxins come in a stunning array of forms in *Shadowrun*, some of them weaponized, some of them recreational. This section will deal with them. It opens with those toxins used primarily as weapons against the characters. Following those come the more recreational pharmaceuticals and their technological cousins. Then we finish up with rules and guidelines for substance abuse and addiction.

TOXINS

Knockout drugs. Truth serum. Nerve gas. All of these are examples of toxins, a catch-all term for a substance that's mostly meant for use as a weapon, as opposed to recreation. Each substance has several attribute ratings.

Vector: This shows how the toxin is delivered to the target.

Contact toxins can be solid, liquid, or gaseous. They attack the victim through the skin. These toxins, if in liquid form, can be coated on a weapon. In this case, they can be applied with a successful Melee Attack, whether the attack causes damage or not. A chemical seal (p. 437) offers complete protection from this vector, unless it's breached. Chemical protection (p. 437) gives a dice bonus equal to its rating to the target's Toxin Resistance Test.

Ingestion toxins must be eaten by the victim. They can be solids or liquids. Since they must be eaten, they generally take longer to have an effect. Toxin extractor bioware (p. 460) provides a dice pool bonus equal to the rating of the augmentation to resist ingested and other toxins.

Inhalation toxins are applied as an aerosol spray or gas, and they must be breathed in by the target. Gas masks, chemical seals, and active internal air tanks (p. 455) provide immunity to inhalation toxins. Chemical protection gives bonus dice to the Toxin Resistance Test equal to its rating.

Injection toxins must get into the target's bloodstream, whether through a dart, hypodermic needle, or a cut. These can also be used to coat an edged melee weapon. They are applied to the target with a successful melee attack that causes damage.

TOXIN AND DRUG PROTECTION TABLE

GEAR	PROTECT AGAINST	PROTECTION
Chemical seal	Contact, Inhalation	Immunity
Chemical protection	Contact	+Rating
Digestive expansion	Ingestion	+2
Dwarf natural resistance	All toxins, diseases	+2
Gas mask	Inhalation	Immunity
Internal air tank	Inhalation	Immunity
Pathogenic defense	Diseases	+Rating
Respirator	Inhalation	+Rating
Toxin extractor	All toxins	+Rating
Tracheal filter	Inhalation	+Rating

Speed: This determines how quickly the victim suffers the toxin's Effect. These effects are always applied at the end of a Combat Turn.

Immediate means the Effect is applied at the end of the same Combat Turn in which the victim is exposed.

A Speed of *1 Combat Turn* means the Effect is applied at the end of the next Combat Turn, and so on.

Power: This tells how powerful the toxin is. For toxins that do actual damage, either Physical or Stun, Power serves as the DV of the attack. A Toxin Resistance Test (see below) is used to reduce the damage. If Power is reduced to 0, then no damage occurs, and no other effects happen.

Some toxins don't inflict actual damage. Power is still used to determine if other effects take place. If the Toxin Resistance Test reduces the Power to 0, then no effects take place.

Effect: This tells what happens to a victim exposed to the toxin. Many toxins simply cause damage; in this case, the Effect supplies the type of damage. Damage from toxins is treated just like any other injury. Some toxins cause other effects, which are listed in their description. Unless otherwise noted, all effects occur unless the toxin's Power is reduced to 0 in a Toxin Resistance Test.

Disorientation causes the victim a -2 dice pool modifier to all actions for ten minutes, due to confusion and disorientation.

Nausea is a catch-all term; it includes pain, panic, vomiting, and double vision. If the Power of an attack after the Toxin Resistance Test exceeds the target's Willpower, he is incapacitated (unable to take any actions) with vomiting and dizziness for 3 Combat Turns. Whether or not a character is incapacitated, Nausea doubles all of a character's wound modifiers for ten minutes. A nauseated character with 3 boxes of damage (a -1 wound modifier), for example, suffers -2 dice on all tests instead.

Paralysis renders the victim unable to move by blocking the body's neuromuscular signals. If the Power of an attack after the Toxin Resistance Test exceeds the target's Reaction, the target is paralyzed and unable to take physical actions for 1 hour. Even if the target is not paralyzed, he suffers a -2 dice pool modifier for the next hour.

Penetration: This rating works like a weapon's Armor Penetration and affects the rating of any protective system used to defend against it.

USING TOXINS

When a toxin comes into play, note its Speed to determine when it takes effect. At the end of the appropriate Combat Turn, the victim makes a Toxin Resistance Test to see if the toxin takes effect. This test uses Body + Willpower + the rating of any protective gear/systems; each hit reduces the toxin's Power by 1 point. If the Power is reduced to zero, the toxic substance takes no effect; otherwise, apply the effect depending on the remaining Power level.

EXAMPLE

Donner is in a tight spot. The room he's in was just flooded with CS/Tear gas, and he doesn't have a gas mask. He does have Toxin Extractor cyberware at Rating 4, however.

CS/Tear gas has a Speed of 1 Combat Turn, so he won't feel any effects until the end of the next Combat Turn. He uses his action this Combat Turn to get out of the room and avoid further exposure. At the end of the next Combat Turn, he has to pay the piper for his initial exposure. He has Body 5, Willpower 4, and Toxin Extractor 4, for a dice pool of 13. The toxin has a power of 8. He rolls his Toxin Resistance Test and gets 5 hits, reducing the power to 3. The toxin inflicts Stun Damage and disorientation, so Donner takes 3 boxes of Stun Damage and suffers a –2 modifier to all actions for the next ten minutes due to the disorientation effect.

TOXIN COSTS

TOXIN	AVAILABILITY	COST (PER DOSE)
CS/Tear Gas	4R	20¥
Gamma-Scopolamine	14F	200¥
Narcojet	8R	50¥
Nausea Gas	6R	25¥
Neuro-Stun VIII	12R	60¥
Neuro-Stun IX	13R	60¥
Neuro-Stun X	14R	100¥
Pepper Punch	—	5¥
Seven-7	[illegible]	1,000¥

CONCENTRATION

Sometimes a character gets hit with a lot of a toxin. If exposed to more than a single dose at a given time, increase the Power of the toxin by +1 per additional dose. Duration might also increase, at the gamemaster's discretion.

Likewise, if left in contact with a toxin for an extended period, the effects can be increased. If the victim is still being exposed to the toxin when the toxin's Speed interval elapses, perform another Toxin Resistance Test, and so on each time the Speed interval elapses. For each subsequent Toxin Resistance Test after the first, increase the Power of the toxin by +1, cumulatively.

ANTIDOTES

If they're to do any good, antidotes must be taken before a toxin's effects kick in. An antidote taken afterwards will not diminish the damage caused by the toxin but may reduce the toxin's other effects. Note that some toxins simply have no effective antidote, particularly neurotoxins.

If a victim has suffered Physical damage overflow from a toxin, then application of the appropriate antidote automatically stabilizes her.

SAMPLE TOXINS

The following are just a few of the chemical weapons that shadowrunners might encounter. Gamemasters should note that wind and other environmental conditions may disperse gaseous toxins when used outdoors.

CS/TEAR GAS

Vector: Contact, Inhalation
Speed: 1 Combat Turn
Penetration: 0
Power: 8
Effect: Disorientation, Nausea, Stun Damage

CS gas is an irritant that affects the eyes, skin, and mucus membranes, causing them to burn and water.

It also stimulates a physiological panic response: increased heart rate, shortness of breath, and so forth. Washing thoroughly with soap and water can remove CS from the victim's skin, thus ending the duration of the nausea prematurely. CS gas becomes inert after 2 minutes of contact with the air.

GAMMA-SCOPOLAMINE

Vector: Injection
Speed: Immediate
Penetration: 0
Power: 12
Effect: Paralysis, Truth Serum (see description)

This particularly nasty agent, derived from nightshade, is a neuromuscular blocking agent that paralyzes its target. It takes effect immediately, causing dizziness, pupil dilation, speech loss, delirium, and paralysis. The full effects last for about an hour. Once the primary effects wear off, the remaining residue in the victim's system acts as a "truth serum" for another hour. Reduce the target's Willpower by 3 (to a minimum of 1) for the remainder of the toxin's effect.

NARCOJECT

Vector: Injection
Speed: Immediate
Penetration: 0
Power: 15
Effect: Stun Damage

A common tranquilizer, narcoject is typically used with dart guns. It has no side effects.

NAUSEA GAS

Vector: Inhalation
Speed: 3 Combat Turns
Penetration: 0
Power: 9
Effect: Disorientation, Nausea

Used as a riot control agent, this gas causes nausea and a crippling need to vomit. Nausea gas becomes inert after two minutes of contact with the air.

NEURO-STUN

Vector: Contact, Inhalation
Speed: 1 Combat Turn
Penetration: 0 (Neuro-Stun VIII and IX), -2 (Neuro-Stun X)
Power: 15
Effect: Disorientation, Stun Damage

Neuro-Stun is colorless and odorless. It's the industry standard knockout gas for emergency containment situations and comes in various concentrations. Neuro-Stun VIII becomes inert after ten minutes of contact with air; Neuro-Stun IX and X become inert after one minute.

PEPPER PUNCH

Vector: Contact, Inhalation
Speed: 1 Combat Turn
Penetration: 0
Power: 11
Effect: Nausea, Stun Damage

Pepper punch is an irritant combining CS and oreocapsicum, the active ingredient in hot peppers, along with other chemicals. It is typically deployed as a liquid spray for personal defense and deterrence; this agent is often tagged with RFID tags or special dyes to identify victims later. Someone dosed with pepper punch feels an intense burning on any affected skin; this affect is even more pronounced if it gets in the eyes, nose, or mouth. Victims sprayed in the eyes have trouble seeing, and breathing becomes difficult.

SEVEN-7

Vector: Contact, Inhalation
Speed: 1 Combat Turn
Penetration: -2
Power: 12
Effect: Physical Damage, Disorientation, Nausea

This is another colorless and odorless gas, developed specifically to bypass chemical protection measures. In addition to Physical damage, Seven-7 causes cramping, nausea and double vision in victims. Seven-7 oxidizes and becomes inert after ten minutes of exposure to air.

DRUGS AND BTLS

In the world of *Shadowrun*, there are lots of things you want to get away from—some of them big, some of them small. Everybody faces them, and everyone needs an escape from them. Most people seek solace in a hobby or other recreational pursuit.

Some people define "recreational pursuit" as using drugs, whether those drugs are chemical or technological in nature.

While many traditional intoxicants of the past, such as alcohol and cocaine, are still around, they've lost some popularity to the new breed of brainbenders. Better-than-life (BTL) chips and their myriad electronic cousins have become extremely popular due to their immediacy. Not to be outdone, drug cartels have created the next generation of narcotics via genetic engineering and the magical properties of Awakened flora.

DRUGS

Drugs are toxins that you take on purpose, and they run the gamut from beer to high-intensity performance and mood enhancers. They can have enormous effects on a character's mood and personality. If a character gets high on street drugs, it shouldn't be glossed over; role-playing should be encouraged. People on these

drugs usually display dramatic changes in their behavior. Depending on the drug, they can become deliriously happy or catastrophically depressed. They can become sexually aroused, with or without an accompanying loss of inhibitions. They might become paranoid and enter a homicidal rage.

Like toxins, drugs have several attribute ratings. Most of these are the same as for toxins (see above), but a few are specific to drugs. Each drug (along with other addictive substances and products) also has an Addiction Rating and Addiction Threshold used in tests to determine if you become addicted after using the substance. These ratings are found in the **Addiction Table** (p. 414), along with rules for making Addiction Tests.

Duration: This indicates how long the effects of the drug last. This can range from several minutes to several days.

Addiction Type tells whether addiction to this drug is Physiological, Psychological, or both.

DRUG COSTS

DRUG	AVAILABILITY	COST (PER DOSE)
Bliss	3F	15¥
Cram	2R	10¥
Deepweed	[illegible]	400¥
Jazz	2R	75¥
Kamikaze	[illegible]	100¥
Long Haul	—	50¥
Nitro	2R	50¥
Novacoke	2R	10¥
Psyche	[illegible]	200¥
Zen	4R	5¥

BLISS

Vector: Inhalation, Injection
Speed: 1 Combat Turn
Duration: (6—Body) hours, minimum 1 hour
Addiction Type: Both
Effect: -1 Reaction, +1 to all thresholds, -1 to all Limits, High Pain Tolerance 3 (p. 74)

A tranquilizing narcotic, bliss is an opiate synthesized from poppy plants. It takes its name from the sensations its users feel.

Players attempting to roleplay a bliss user may want to focus on the escapist angle, using the drug to block out the chaotic or unsatisfying world.

CRAM

Vector: Ingestion, Inhalation
Speed: 10 minutes
Duration: (12—Body) hours, minimum 1 hour
Addiction Type: Psychological
Effect: +1 Reaction, +1D6 Initiative Dice

Cram is an extremely popular stimulant. When this drug wears off, users crash and suffer 6 Stun damage (unresisted).

Cram users appear hyper-alert, almost to the point of paranoia. They react quickly, often without thought, and they're prone to irrational outbursts. Other common side effects are jitteriness and fidgeting.

DEEPWEED

Vector: Ingestion, Inhalation
Speed: Immediate
Duration: (6—Body) hours, minimum 1 hour
Addiction Type: Physiological
Effects: +1 Willpower, +1 Mental limit, -1 Physical limit, forces Awakened characters to astrally perceive

Deepweed is a narcotic derived by Caribbean houngans from an Awakened form of kelp. It's extremely enticing to the Awakened and is sometimes used to dose targets for possession. Deepweed forces any magically active user to astrally perceive, even if the user is an adept without the astral perception ability. Once its effects have worn off, deepweed users suffer a -1 to all dice pool modifiers and -1 to all limits for the same duration as the initial effect.

There are dangers inherent in forced astral perception, such as attracting unwanted attention. Role-playing the effects of deepweed may mean portraying someone who seems not completely "present," since they aren't.

JAZZ

Vector: Inhalation
Speed: Immediate
Duration: 10 x 1D6 minutes.
Addiction Type: Both
Effect: +1 Reaction, +1 Physical limit, +2D6 Initiative Dice

Jazz is a stimulant designed to better the odds for run-of-the-mill law-enforcement officers who run up against augmented street samurai. It's usually taken from a single-dose inhaler (or "popper").

When jazz wears off, the user crashes and is flooded with despondent and miserable emotions, suffering the effects of Disorientation (p. 409) for a duration equal to the duration of the initial effect.

While cram makes people hyper and twitchy, jazz makes people jumpy and hyper as caffeinated two-year-olds. Role-playing a jazz user means turning it up a notch, portraying someone with too much energy to burn.

KAMIKAZE

Vector: Inhalation
Speed: Immediate
Duration: 10 x 1D6 minutes
Addiction Type: Physiological
Effect: +1 Body, +1 Agility, +2 Strength, +1 Willpower, +2 Physical limit, +2D6 Initiative Dice, High Pain Tolerance 3 (p. 74)

Kamikaze is a tailored combat stimulant. When kamikaze wears off, the user crashes and suffers -1 Reaction, -1 Willpower, and -2 to all Limits for a duration equal to that of the initial effect. He also suffers 6 Stun damage (unresisted).

The repeated use of kamikaze has a destructive effect on the user's metabolism. Large doses can cause excitement, tremors, momentary euphoria, and dilated pupils. Excess doses (bordering on overdose level) cause anxiety, hallucinations, and uncontrolled muscular movements. Even higher dosages lead to death. Kamikaze users are near-crazed, filled with a feeling of imperviousness and invincibility, exhibiting almost no regard for their own well-being. They can be entertaining to watch, as long as you're not in front of them.

LONG HAUL

Vector: Injection
Speed: 10 minutes
Duration: 4 days
Addiction Type: Psychological
Effect: Alleviates need for sleep

A combination of synthesized hormones and other brain-regulating chemicals, long haul stimulates the brain and keeps the user awake, obviating the need for sleep. A character dosed on long haul can remain awake for four days—without incurring any modifiers from fatigue or weariness. After this time, however, the user immediately passes out and sleeps soundly for 8D6 hours. If the character is kept awake during this period, he suffers from disorientation (p. 409) as he is afflicted with hallucinations and an inability to concentrate.

If a second dose of long haul is taken after the first has worn off, the character can stay awake an additional 1D6 ÷ 2 days. After that period, he suffers 10 Stun damage (unresisted) and must crash as detailed above. Long haul cannot keep a character awake past this point, no matter how many additional doses are administered.

NITRO

Vector: Inhalation
Speed: 1 Combat Turn
Duration: 10 x 1D6 minutes
Addiction Type: Both
Effect: +2 Strength, +2 Willpower, +2 Perception, +2 Physical limit, High Pain Tolerance 6 (p. 74)

A dangerous combination of potent drugs favored by troll gangers, nitro is a powerful stimulant that can easily kill a user. After the drug's effects wear off, the subject suffers -2 to all limits and takes 9 Stun damage (unresisted) for an equal duration.

Nitro users feel infused with energy, suffer a diminished attention span, and talk incessantly (even to themselves).

NOVACOKE

Vector: Inhalation, Injection
Speed: 1 Combat Turn
Duration: (10—Body) hours, minimum of 1 hour
Addiction Type: Both
Effect: +1 Reaction, +1 Charisma, +1 Perception, +1 Social Limit, High Pain Tolerance 1 (p. 74)

A stimulant derived from coca plants, novacoke is a highly addictive social drug. After the drug wears off, Charisma and Willpower are both reduced to 1, and all limits are at -1 for a duration equal to the duration of the initial effect.

PSYCHE

Vector: Ingestion
Speed: 10 minutes
Duration: (12—Body) hours, minimum of 1 hour
Addiction Type: Psychological
Effect: +1 Intuition, +1 Logic, +1 Mental limit

This designer stimulant is especially prized by magicians and technomancers alike. In addition to the effects noted above, Awakened users also only suffer a -1 dice pool modifier for each sustained spell (rather than the standard -2). Psyche users are simultaneously hyper-aware and detached, easily absorbed by detail and obsessive about certain facts or problems.

ZEN

Vector: Inhalation
Speed: 5 minutes
Duration: 10 x 1D6 minutes
Addiction Type: Psychological
Effect: -2 Reaction, +1 Willpower, -1 physical action dice pool modifier

A psychedelic hallucinogen, zen is popular among those looking to escape reality or seeking trance-like states.

BETTER THAN LIFE

The technological drug of choice since the early 2050s, better-than-life (BTL) programs take simsense recordings and remove the safety protocols. These highly psychologically addictive programs produce high-intensity simsense output that directly affects the pleasure centers of the brain.

Users frequently loop BTLs into continuous-playback mode. When done over extended periods, this can lead

to catatonia, amnesia, dissociative identity disorder, flashbacks, synaesthesia (sensory "crossover" where sight is interpreted as taste, sounds becomes smell, etc.), and eventually death as users lose all will to do anything but be entertained by the program. Most deaths from BTL abuse are from malnutrition, dehydration, or suicide.

Better-than-life used to be exclusively chip-based, but advances in wireless technology have enabled some BTL pushers to operate exclusively online, selling their wares as downloadable software

All better-than-life programs, whether chips or downloads, have the following common statistics:

Speed: Immediate
Duration: Varies, typically 10 x 1D6 minutes
Addiction Type: Psychological

BTL CHIPS

Better-Than-Life chips are still enormously popular in spite of omnipresent wireless technology. Some dealers prefer a hands-on approach with their customers, and many BTL users are poor or just set in their ways.

There are two playback formats. Dreamdeck chips require an old-fashioned simsense deck or module that has been modified with hot-sim to accommodate the higher-intensity BTL signal. The other format is the direct-input chip, which contains all the needed electronics to play it back when slotted into a skilljack or datajack. Both formats are designed to auto-erase themselves after a single use, so that the customer has to keep coming back for more. This one-shot, self-erasing feature can be bypassed with a Hardware + Logic (10, 1 hour) Extended Test.

Dreamchips are standard simsense recordings modified to produce BTL output. These might be studio-produced sims that are doctored up, or street recordings that offer a personal, intense glimpse into someone's life. Popular themes are heroic fantasies, recorded crimes, and pornography, with hardcore violence and snuff chips serving the most jaded appetites.

Moodchips focus on the emotive track and intense emotional sensations. Themes run the gamut from euphoria to sexual urges to terror and hate. After the chip's program has run its course, the user crashes, usually feeling the opposite emotion of the BTL for an hour or two. Moodchips are the most common BTLs on the street. The RAS override feature is frequently disabled so that users can move around freely under the influence of the chip.

Personafix chips, also called p-fixes, are the strangest and most dangerous BTLs. A combination of simsense and skillsoft technology modifies the basic personality of the user, installing the mnemonic routines of certain behavior patterns. While under the chip's influence, the user becomes a different person. Popular chips are based off of historical figures or pop culture icons. "Workers" in bunraku ("puppet") sex parlors are fitted with personafix BTLs, sometimes combined with data filter cyberware to protect a client's anonymity. The RAS override feature is frequently disabled so that users can move around freely under the influence of the chip.

BTL COSTS

CHIP/DOWNLOAD	AVAILABILITY	COST (PER DOSE)
Dreamchip	4F	20¥
Moodchip	4F	50¥
Personafix	4F	200¥
Tripchip	4F	100¥

Tripchips are like moodchips, primarily producing sensory output, flooding the user with interesting and unusual sensations. These can be simple effects, or they can be advanced sensations such as simulating being underwater. The latest craze is deliberately induced synaesthesia with jacked-up sensory levels and the RAS override disabled, allowing users to experience their surroundings in an entirely new way.

BTL DOWNLOADS

All the above are, of course, available as one-time, self-erasing programs. The user's commlink has to have an appropriately modified hot-sim module to use these programs.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND ADDICTION

People use. It's a fact of life on the streets of the Sixth World: People use substances to escape reality, and more often than they want to admit, they abuse those substances. Sometimes it's for recreational escapism, sometimes it's to get an edge on the competition. When people abuse substances, they run the risk of becoming addicted.

Substance abuse and addiction should be handled in terms of role-playing. Part of a character's portrayal and actions should be influenced by his choices, his temptations, and his struggle to overcome (or succumb to) those temptations. While the player should ultimately be allowed to decide his character's choices and fate, the gamemaster should be ready to take advantage of opportunities for drama during the game. If the game they're playing leans that way, dealing with addictions can provide tremendous drama. A long-sober character can be pushed to her limits by events around her, or she may discover a stash of her intoxicant of choice, which she had long thought destroyed. An active addict can find herself in jail, unable to get a fix and forced to go cold turkey.

Characters can start the game with the Addiction Negative quality (p. 77), or they can get it at the gamemaster's discretion during the game. This gives the

gamemaster the ability to determine how common substance abuse is in his own game, including whether or not it's a part of the game they're comfortable including.

ADDICTION TESTS

When you starts using drugs (or chips, or foci, or hot-sim, or anything else in this spirits-forsaken world that's addictive), you might need to make an Addiction Test when you do too much of it. Each substance that can hook you has an Addiction rating and an Addiction Threshold, listed on the **Addiction Table** (at right).

Addiction can be physiological, psychological, or both. Psychological dependence usually stems from the emotional gratification, euphoria, and escapism derived from use of a drug. Physiological addiction results from the body's dependence on the substance for its continued "survival." Some drugs can confer both types of addiction, making them among the most difficult to kick.

Every time you use an addictive substance during (11 — Addiction Rating) weeks in a row, you need to make an Addiction Test. The clock on this keeps ticking even if you skip a week, but every week you go without indulging reduces the Addiction Threshold by 1 (it returns to normal when you use again). If the threshold hits 0, you're off the hook until you use the substance again. This means that substances with high Addiction ratings (like kamikaze) could get you hooked in a single dose.

When it's time for an Addiction Test, check to see if the addiction type is psychological, physiological, or both—that will tell you what you'll be adding to your dice pool for the test. If it's psychological, use Logic + Willpower; if it's physiological use Body + Willpower. If it's both, you need to make two tests: one psychological and one physiological. The threshold for the test is given on the **Addiction Table** (at right). If you're using more than one addictive substance, you need to make tests for each of them every time an Addiction Test comes up.

If you fail the Addiction Test, you gain the Addiction quality for the substance you've been using (without picking up any bonus Karma for it). If you already have the Addiction quality for the substance, it gets more severe by one step (Mild to Moderate to Severe to Burnout). If you're already at Burnout ... well, it's not good.

If you fail an Addiction Test when you're already burnt out, your Body or Willpower—whichever is higher—is permanently reduced by 1, along with your maximum Rating for that attribute. If they're tied, reduce Body for a physiological addiction or Willpower for a psychological addiction (if it's both, flip a coin). If either attribute drops to 0, you fall into a coma. Fill your Stun and Physical Condition Monitors and then start taking one box of overflow damage (**Exceeding the Condition Monitor**, p. 170).

ROLE-PLAYING ADDICTION

Everyone handles addiction differently. In game terms, this is based on their **Addiction level** (p. 77).

ADDICTION TABLE

SUBSTANCE	ADDICTION RATING	ADDICTION THRESHOLD
Drugs		
Alcohol	3	2
Bliss	5	1
Cram	4	3
Jazz	8	1
Kamikaze	9	3
Long Haul	2	1
Nitro	9	3
Novacoke	1	2
Psyche	6	2
Soykaf	1	2
Zen	3	1
Simsense		
BTL, Dreamchip	6	1
BTL, Moodchip	1	2
BTL, Personafix	7	2
BTL, Tripchip	2	1
Hot-Sim Simsense	3	1
Legal-Strength Simsense	1	1
Skillwires	5	2
Focus Addiction	total Force of all active foci	1
Essence Drain	critter's Magic	2

Mild addiction indicates more social use of the drug. They'll feel a craving "every now and then" and don't see any kind of problem with indulging their habit. There's no reason not to, as they see it. Most don't realize that they have a problem, even when they notice problems with their attempts to cut back on their use. Mild addictions are as close to manageable as addictions get.

Moderate addiction indicates that the character has developed a tolerance for his drug of choice, and displays stronger cravings. They begin to use more frequently, up their dosages, or move on to something harder. Others have begun to notice the problem, in spite of attempts to conceal it. Repercussions from his habit begin to increase; these generally include mood swings, a drop in reliability, and the beginnings of financial problems as he begins spending more on his habit.

Severe addictions are typical of stereotypical junkies. Their lives are out of control, they're constantly strung out and need their fix, and every shred of income goes

to feed their habit. They'll steal, borrow from loan sharks, prostitute themselves, and just about anything else to finance their next fix. It's up to the gamemaster and the player to figure out where the bottom is. One thing to keep in mind is that when someone hits rock bottom, he could die ... or he could be inspired to climb out of the pit.

Burnout addictions are what happen when someone bottoms out and then proceeds to go lower. They're long-term addicts who now display physiological and psychological side effects from continual substance abuse. Characters who continue in this state usually have life expectancies measured in weeks, if not days, and they suffer deteriorating health effects along the way.

Once a character has reached the Burnout stage, things start getting bad very quickly. They begin to show physiological health problems and slurred speech. As the downward spiral progresses, they might also develop abscesses, infections, incontinence, and other unpleasant side effects. In addition to the physical effects, the addict suffers psychological effects including blackouts, flashbacks, drastic mood swings, schizophrenia, and paranoia, among many others.

GETTING A FIX

Once addicted, users need a dosage, or fix, on a regular basis, as appropriate to the severity of their Addiction quality (p. 77). To resist the craving, make a Withdrawal Test (use rules for Addiction Test), applying modifiers appropriate to the addiction level. If you don't resist, you need your fix or you'll go into withdrawal.

WITHDRAWAL AND STAYING CLEAN

Withdrawal is a bitch, whether it's voluntary or forced. Depending on the drug and the degree of addiction, withdrawal may take a while. When you go too long without using what you're addicted to, you enter withdrawal, with the effects listed under the Addiction quality description (p. 77). If you can stay off the stuff for a number of weeks equal to the Addiction rating, you can make an Addiction Test for the substance—if you succeed, you can buy off your Addiction quality with the appropriate amount of Karma. If you fail or can't afford to buy off the quality, you're still in withdrawal and the process starts again.

OVERDOSING

Too much of anything can hurt you, or even kill you. Whenever you take a substance while you're already on that substance or one that has a shared effect (like the way cram and novacoke both affect Reaction), you take Stun damage with a DV equal to the sum of the Addiction Ratings of the overlapping drugs, resisted with Body + Willpower.

STREET GEAR

Nothing to fear if you've got the gear!

Nobody can do a brisk business in the field of shadowrunning without the right kit. A commlink to organize and communicate with the people you like, guns, ammo, blades, and other weaponry for the people you don't like, armor to deal with the people who don't like you, and maybe a few precautions to keep the whole thing in the shadows and completely out of the light of day. Having the right tool at the right time—whether it's a stimulant patch, gas grenade, riot shield, miniwelder, maglock passkey, or a disguise kit—can mean the difference between being a legend in your own right, or a fading stain on the pavement.

Many runners love their equipment, playing favorites and installing flashy and impressive customizations, from a street samurai with gold-plated Predators to a techie pimping out his cyberdeck case. Others disdain this hardware fetishism and take a more pragmatic "toolbox" approach—it's not the gadgets that matter, it's the skill needed to use them right. But either way, there's no getting around the fact that shadowrunners need specialized equipment to do their jobs.

This section introduces all the rules you need for gear—concealing, carrying, buying, and selling—and includes a representative, but not exhaustive, selection of the toys that runners, gangers, mob and metroplex soldiers, corp-cops, and other hardcases play with on the mean streets of 2075.

GEAR RATINGS

Every item described in this chapter includes a set of statistics. Every item has a cost along with an Availability Rating, and most non-weapon, non-armor items, except those that simply confer an ability or don't, have an overall Rating, usually between 1 and 6. Often a gear's Cost and Availability are functions of its Rating.

The other statistics that depend on the type of item—damage for weapons, capacity for firearms, armor value for protective clothing, and so on—are explained in the Gear Ratings Glossary.

BUYING GEAR

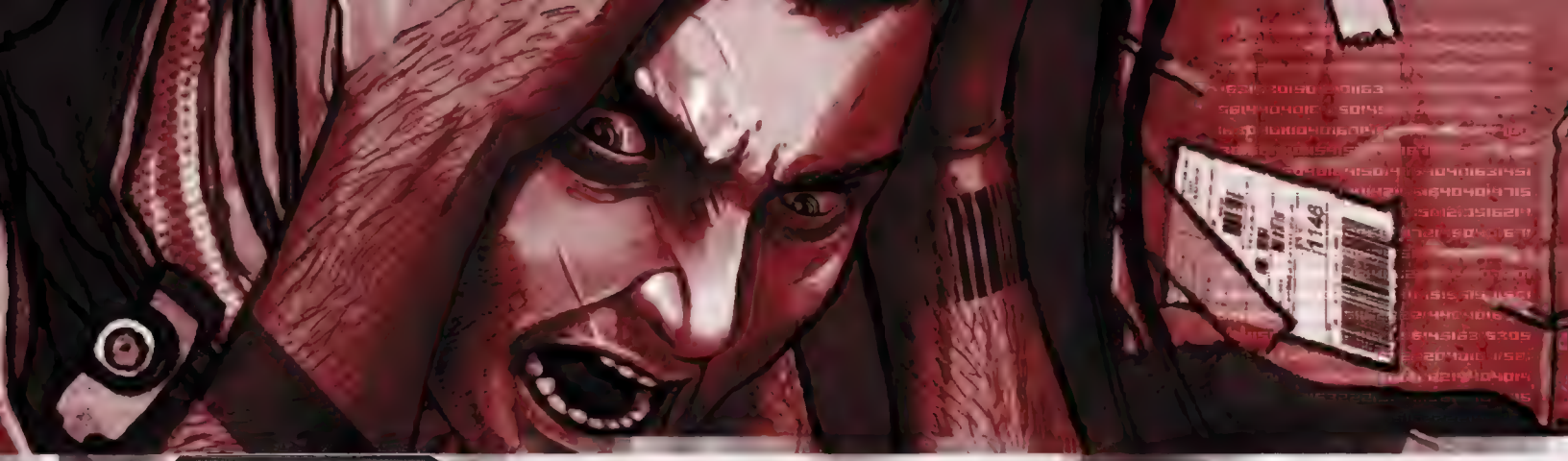
Gear's Availability Rating determines how easy (or hard, or practically impossible) it is to acquire a needed or desired piece of equipment. Availability is an abstract amalgamation of factors like rarity, legality, distribution issues, supply, demand, and so on. The letter that follows an item's numerical Availability Rating shows whether the item is Restricted (R) or Forbidden (F). For this reason, the gamemaster should feel free to modify an item's Availability Rating—either the numerical value, or its legality code—in situations that would warrant it, like if the runner is in a war zone or in a country with a restricted economy.

STANDARD GOODS

Standard items with no Availability rating can be purchased at your local Kong-WalMart, Stuffer Shack, or Microdeck, or perhaps ordered online or picked up from a vending machine. All you have to do is pay the cost listed in the book for the item (with adjustments from the gamemaster if she wants, according to local market fluctuations or other extenuating circumstances she deems appropriate).

While easy to buy, standard goods are eminently traceable. Records of legal purchases are almost always kept, shared, and cross-indexed; whether this datatrail gets stuck to your fake SIN or, worse, a real one, it's a potential liability. Purchasing habits are valuable to marketing companies, so you'll start seeing AR advertisements tailored to what you buy and what you like. And since Big Brother Commerce is watching, remember that the Matrix host that knows and remembers your favorite store to buy sneakers at isn't necessarily as secure as your commlink. Fake IDs can be used to shield yourself from this pervasive data-mining, but as long as you're on the grid, even fake IDs will accumulate profiles of their own after long-term use. And there's always the chance someone can find out more about you than you want to let go.

Of course, standard goods can also be purchased on the black market to avoid traceability, but the gamemaster may decide that the latest copy of Miracle Shooter is more expensive with the digital serial numbers filed off and apply a surcharge for your paranoia.



GEAR RATINGS GLOSSARY

Accuracy: Refers to a weapon's overall accuracy. A firearm's Accuracy acts as the limit for tests involving that weapon, capping the number of hits that can be achieved on an attack roll using it.

Ammo: Refers to the amount of ammunition a ranged weapon can hold, followed by the method of reloading in parentheses: (b) means break action, (c) means detachable external box magazine, or "clip" in modern street parlance, (d) means drum, (ml) means muzzle-loader, (m) means internal magazine, (cy) means cylinder, and (belt) means belt-fed.

Armor: Each piece of armor has an Armor value that adds to the wearer's Damage Resistance dice pool (see **Armor,** p. 168).

Armor Penetration: All weapons have an Armor Penetration value, although in some cases, this value is listed with no value, meaning no AP. The AP value indicates how a weapon interacts with armor (see **Armor Penetration,** p. 169). A positive value adds to the target's Armor value, while a negative value reduces the target's Armor value.

Availability: The higher the Availability of an item, the more difficult and costly it is to get it (see **Buying Gear**, p. 416). Gear without an Availability rating can be bought at an appropriate local store or ordered online without any trouble. The letter that follows an item's numerical Availability rating shows whether the item is Restricted (R) or Forbidden (F). Items without a letter in parentheses are considered legal—they aren't necessarily easy to find, but you won't ever get arrested for seeking them (see **(Il)legality**, p. 419.

Blast: This rating is possessed by grenades, missiles, rockets, and other area-of-effect weapons. Blast is the amount the blast weapon's damage value is reduced per meter of distance from the explosion's point of origin (see **Blast Effects,** p. 436).

Capacity: Some sensor packages and cyberware can be equipped with a range of subsystems. A Capacity value is listed for these, indicating the maximum amount of "slots" worth of accessories the item can hold. If the Capacity is listed in brackets, it's the cost of that subsystem or accessory, or the number of slots that item takes up. Some cyberware items with a Capacity cost can also be installed as standalone items (taking up Essence) rather than subsystems (taking up Capacity); if both costs are listed, only one applies, depending on whether you installed it in another item or in yourself.

Concealability Modifier: This indicates how easy it is to hide a given item, and is applied as a dice pool modifier to Perception + Intuition Tests to spot the item (see **Concealing Gear,** p. 419).

Cost: This is the base price a character must pay to buy the item. If the item is legal, this is the standard price found at stores or online. Note that rare and/or illegal items may cost less or more depending on certain black market variations (see **(Il)legality,** p. 419). Cost is also subject to local supply and demand, so the gamemaster should feel free to adjust it accordingly for certain settings.

Damage Value (DV): A weapon's Damage Value represents the base amount of harm, in points of damage, it causes when it hits a target. Damage Values consist of a number (the boxes of damage inflicted) and a letter indicating the type of damage caused: P for Physical, S for Stun. A parenthetical annotation following the damage type, such as (f) or (e), indicates that the damage is flechette or electrical (see **Damage**, p. 169).

Device Rating: The Device Rating determines the overall quality and effectiveness of a device, from a stimulant patch to a commlink. Device ratings are described in detail on p. 234.

Essence Cost: All cyberware and bioware implants have an Essence Cost, representing the reduction of the character's Essence rating that occurs when the augmentation is implanted.

Mode: A firearm's firing mode indicates the rate of fire it is capable of. Some weapons have more than one mode available, so characters may switch between them (see **Firearms,** p. 178). The firing modes are: SS (single-shot), SA (semi-automatic), BF (burst fire), and FA (full auto).

Mounts: There are several places where a weapon accessory can be attached to a firearm: underbarrel, barrel, or top-mount. Only one accessory can be attached to a particular mount. Integral accessories (those that come with the weapon) don't take up mount locations. Hold-outs don't have mounts. Pistols, machine pistols, and SMGs do not have an underbarrel mount, just top and barrel mounts. All rifles and heavy weapons have all three types of mounts. Projectile weapons can only take accessories designed for them specifically.

Reach: Melee weapons may have a Reach rating, an abstract value that rates the length and size of the weapon. A weapon with longer Reach gives its wielder an advantage over enemies with a lower Reach (see **Reach,** p. 184).

Recoil Compensation (RC): This lists the amount of recoil compensation a firearm has to offer, reducing the modifiers from a weapon's recoil (see **Recoil,** p. 175). Numbers in parentheses refer to full recoil compensation that applies only when all integral accessories are deployed (folding or detachable stocks and so forth).

STARTING GEAR

Like it says in **character creation** (p. 62), starting characters may not purchase items with a rating greater than 6 or an Availability greater than 12 during character creation. You don't need to worry about your purchases at character creation going on some kind of permanent record (although there are some qualities you can take that would). Once the game is on, you can beg, borrow, and steal whatever gear you can get your grubby little hands on—at least, you can certainly try.

BLACK MARKET GOODS

When you get to the good stuff, the higher the Availability Rating is, the harder it is to acquire the item. To purchase an item off the books, make an Availability Test. This is an Opposed Test of your Negotiation + Charisma [Social] versus the item's Availability Rating. If you win the Opposed Test, you find the gear at the listed price, and it is delivered in the amount of time given on the **Delivery Times** table divided by your net hits. If you tie in the test, you find the gear, but the delivery time is twice that listed on the table. If you fail the test, you can try again after twice the amount of time on the table.

As they say on the street, money solves all problems. If you're willing to throw money at the situation, you can increase your chances of finding a willing seller: for every additional twenty-five percent of the item's value you are willing to pay, you get an additional die on the Negotiation Test. Once you get up to 400 percent of the item's value (12 extra dice), throwing money at the problem doesn't get you any more dice. Even if you had money left to throw.

If you roll a glitch on an Availability Test, your inquiries may have attracted unwanted attention. This could be law enforcement like undercover Lone Star engaging in a sting operation (can you spell entrapment, omae?), your local Yakuza deciding not to shoot straight in their dealings, rival runners or enemies twigging to the deal, or something similar. The exact consequences are up to the gamemaster, but things do not go smoothly as planned. If you roll a critical glitch, the most extreme iteration of the above possibilities occurs, and you stand no chance of actually acquiring the item in question.

CONTACTS AND AVAILABILITY

You probably have a fixer, talismonger, deckmeister, or other contact find the gear you're looking for. Contacts are better than you at acquiring the gear they specialize in. They spend most of their time making and maintaining their connections to the rest of the world while you're out shooting corp security or banishing evil spirits or hacking hosts or whatever you're doing on your shadowruns, so they've had time to hone their gear-acquiring abilities. When contacts look for an item for you, they use their Negotiation and Charisma for the Availability Test, with their Connection Rating serving as a bonus to their Social limit.

If the contact hasn't done a lot of business with you, he might ask for a finder's fee. That's not how contacts make their money on reselling, though. Most of it comes through fencing goods on the cheap.

DELIVERY TIMES TABLE

GEAR COST	DELIVERY TIME
Up to 100¥	6 hours
101¥ to 1,000¥	1 day
1,000¥ to 10,000¥	2 days
10,001 to 100,000¥	1 week
More than 100,000¥	1 month

FENCING GEAR

You can fence some of the loot you've obtained on a shadowrun as a way to scrape together a little extra operating cash during runs (just make sure looting bodies is a lower priority than finishing the run alive and out of jail).

The value you can get for used gear depends on its Availability: the higher the Availability Rating, the better chance the character has for getting a good value from the sale. As a rule, standard goods (legal items with no Availability Rating) can't be fenced for more than a couple nuyen; no one wants your "near-mint" medkit.

Fencing gear is a two-step process. First, you need to find a buyer. This is a time-consuming process that takes an Extended Etiquette + Charisma [Social] Test with a threshold of 10 and an interval equal to the delivery time on the **Delivery Times Table**. You may use the item's Availability in a Teamwork Test if you like; the more rare items you bundle together, the easier it is to find a buyer.

The second step is to actually sell the item. You and the buyer make Opposed Negotiation + Charisma [Social] Tests. The final price the buyer offers is twenty-five percent of the item's listed price, plus five percent for each of your net hits, or minus five percent for each of the buyer's net hits. Once you have a price, you can sell, or you can take your item to another potential buyer and start the entire process over again.

If you get a glitch or a critical glitch on an Etiquette test to find a buyer, then your attempts have attracted unwanted attention from the authorities (or other parties), similar to a glitch on a **Black Market Goods Test** (at left). If you roll a glitch or a critical glitch when you're haggling in the Opposed Negotiation test, then you've managed to insult or otherwise piss off the buyer, and the deal might be off—or worse.

CONTACTS AND FENCING

You can always go to a contact such as a fixer or relevant specialist to fence a hot item for you. He or she will happily take your item and offer you five percent of the item's value times your Loyalty Rating with the contact. You might be able to get more selling it yourself, but your contact will take it off your hands, no questions asked.

(IL)LEGALITY

Most of what you do is illegal ... or at least extra-legal ... well, let's just go with quasi-legal. Basically, operating outside the law is your bag of soychips. It's not just what you do that's against the law, but the stuff you use to do it can be questionable as well. Your job often requires the possession of an array of shady, restricted, or flat-out illegal items. Some of the gear in this chapter is considered illegal just to own.

Items are classified as **legal, restricted** (R), or **forbidden** (F). A legal item can be purchased freely, and owned, transported, and used—legally—without restriction. Of course, if you commit a crime with something that's not normally seen as an illegal item—like killing a random passerby by applying blunt force trauma with a medkit—you will still be subject to prosecution normally, if they ever catch you. But at least you won't face an extra charge for the piece of gear you used!

A restricted item can be purchased, owned, and transported only under special circumstances. You are allowed to purchase and own a gun with the requisite firearms permit, and you can carry it with you with a special concealed carry permit. Of course, if you threaten someone or—heavens forefend—shoot someone with your gun, permit or not, you can expect to spend a long time in jail before or after having your permit revoked. Licenses and permits can be obtained through legal channels, as long as you're a solid citizen with a legal SIN—of course, that goes for shadowrunners with fake SINs acquiring fake licenses, too. A fake license is connected to a fake SIN, and if one of them is exposed, the other becomes worthless (see **Fake SINs**, p. 367).

Forbidden items are never okay for anyone to own or buy or have—at least not for you, a private citizen. No amount of licensing or permits will make owning one anything like permissible in the eyes of the law. Don't get caught, chummer.

JURISDICTION

The law varies from country to country, and with megacorporate extraterritoriality muddying the waters, things are even more complicated in *Shadowrun*. Extraterritoriality means what's a misdemeanor here might be a felony three blocks over. Police officers in some jurisdictions will draw down on you for possessing an item in one jurisdiction that wouldn't merit probable cause in another. The practice of magic in Egypt is banned entirely and active foci could land you in jail, but toting an assault rifle in certain parts of Chicago isn't looked on as a crime—it's just common sense.

The legality restrictions in the book use the basic Seattle, UCAS, guideline as their point of reference. Gamemasters should feel free to adjust legality and availability of certain items in other regions of the world as they see fit, and future *Shadowrun* products may contain alternate availability and legality ratings for different jurisdictions around the Sixth World.

CONCEALING GEAR

It's not just about firepower; sometimes you need to choose the right tool for the setting. Failure to do this can mean getting arrested for carrying a deadly weapon before you make it from the meet to where the job is supposed to go down. Surprise is a shadowrunner's best friend, and carrying a properly hidden hold-out can mean the difference between life and death. As a shadowrunner, you commonly tote around things you don't want casual onlookers to observe. Things that would attract unwanted attention, even if they aren't technically illegal. Or hidden "equalizers" you want to act as your ace in the hole. Some items are easier to hide than others, obviously: most hold-out pistols can be stowed away in a bathing suit if that's what you happen to be wearing, but as awesome as it would be, hiding a katana under your long coat isn't easy.

The Concealability Table lists a selection of items and the standard modifiers that apply.

NOTICING HIDDEN GEAR

Have the observing character make a Perception + Intuition [Mental] Test with a dice pool modified by the item's Concealability to determine whether they notice the item. This test should be penalized normally by distractions, distance, and **visibility modifiers** (p. 175). If the observing character generates at least one success, they notice the item concealed on someone else's person.

ACTIVELY HIDING GEAR

If you're intentionally trying to hide something on your person that somebody else is looking for, and you've taken a little time to hide it (like a Complex Action or so), make an Opposed Palming + Agility [Physical] v. Perception + Intuition [Mental] Test. The observing character's dice pool is modified by the item's Concealability, and he can use Palming in place of Perception if he wants.

If you're being physically patted down, the searcher can use Agility and his Physical limit instead of Intuition and the Mental limit. Additionally, any negative Concealability modifier is cut in half, and any positive Concealability modifier is doubled.

CONCEALABILITY MODIFIERS

MODIFIER*	EXAMPLE ITEMS
-6	RFID tag, bug slap patch, microdrone, contact lenses
-4	Hold-out pistol, monowhip, ammo clip, credstick, chips/softs, sequencer/passkey, autopicker, lockpick set, commlink, glasses
-2	Light pistol, knife, sap, minidrone, microgrenade, flash-pak, jammer, cyberdeck, rigger command console
-1	Heavy pistol, machine pistol with folding stock collapsed, grenade, goggles, ammo belt/drum, club, extendable baton (collapsed)
+2	SMG, machine pistol with folding stock extended, medkit, small drone, extendable baton (extended), stun baton
+4	Sword, sawed-off shotgun, bullpup assault rifle
+6	Katana, monosword, shotgun, assault rifle, sport rifle, crossbow
+8	Sniper rifle, bow, grenade launcher, medium drone
+10/Forget about it	Machine gun, rocket launcher, missile launcher, staff, claymore, metahuman body

*Applies to observer

CARRYING GEAR

As long as the players are reasonable and don't perpetually carry around every firearm and toaster in creation (with enough ammo and bread to operate them both continuously), weights and encumbrance aren't important. There may, however, be circumstances where knowing roughly how much your character can carry may have an impact on the story—like if you break into a vault full of heavy gold bars and need to figure out how many guns you have to drop to haul out the maximum amount. The rules for **Lifting/Carrying**, p. 152, provide the basics, and here are some more details.

CARRYING CAPACITY

Characters can carry their Strength x 10 kilograms in weight without any sort of test—this is your **carrying capacity.** Lifting and carrying more calls for a Strength + Body Test. Each hit increases the weight you can carry by another 10 kilograms.

ENCUMBRANCE

If a character overburdens himself with gear, he suffers encumbrance modifiers. For every 15 kilograms (or part thereof) by which you exceed your carrying capacity, you suffer a -1 modifier to your Physical Limit (minimum limit of 1). This means that a character with Strength 3 (Carrying Capacity 30) that is trudging along with 50 kilograms of equipment suffers a -2 penalty to his Physical Limit.

SIZE COSTS

Trolls have incredibly large bodies and hands, while dwarfs have rather small bodies and hands—consequently, both have trouble using gear built for human dimensions. Corporate initiatives like Evo's MetaErgonomics division have helped a lot; most products are available in dwarf- and troll-friendly sizes. This is reflected in the Lifestyle costs for dwarfs and trolls. Dwarfs have to pay twenty percent more on Lifestyle to make sure they are getting things that fit them, while trolls need to pay the troll tax—their Lifestyle costs are doubled.

USING UNADAPTED GEAR

The extra costs dwarfs and trolls pay mean they have equipment that fits them. When using an item not customized for their hand sizes, by contrast, dwarf and troll characters receive a -2 modifier on their dice pools for using human-sized weapons and equipment. This modifier also applies in reverse; an elf trying to use a dwarf-modified weapon suffers a -2 dice pool modifier. This effect is also cumulative, in the unlikely event it comes up, so a dwarf forced to use a troll-modified tool (or vice versa) suffers a -4 dice pool modifier (and possibly a hernia). In some cases it may be simply impossible for a dwarf or troll to use the other's gear, like armor constructed for completely the wrong build.

WIRELESS FUNCTIONALITY

The world is wireless. Almost every device you can think of has been computerized and equipped with a wireless link, including your microwave, your gun, maybe even your eyes. Every gear item has a wireless-enabled computer built in. Even non-electronic items without any moving parts have built-in computers, so now your pants can store your favorite music (and tell you when it's time to do the laundry). The few devices that are non-wireless are most likely tagged with **RFID tags** (p. 440).

Wireless-enabled items can prevent theft or monitor the item's functionality and alert the user of any malfunctions via their personal area network. For instance, in bone lacing, sensor tags are a convenient way of monitoring for

DEVICE RATINGS

TYPE	RATING	EXAMPLES
Simple	1	General appliances, public terminals, entertainment systems
Average	2	Standard personal electronics, basic cyberware, vehicles, drones, weapons, residential security devices
Smart	3	Security vehicles, alphaware, corporate security devices
Advanced	4	High-end devices, betaware, military vehicles, and mil-spec security devices
Cutting Edge	5	Deltaware, credsticks, black-ops vehicles and security devices
Bleeding Edge	6	Billion-nuyen experimental devices, space craft

stress fractures and other complications. A hacker can't hack into your bone lacing and break your bones, but a hacker can tell your bone lacing that your bones are broken, causing your bone lacing to tell your commlink to call DocWagon, or tell your medkit that you need painkillers.

Every item being wireless means that nearly every item has a device rating. Unless otherwise specified in an item's description, the general Device Rating can be found on the Device Ratings table.

WIRELESS BONUSES

Because nearly every piece of gear and 'ware is wireless capable, it means nearly every piece of gear and cyberware benefits dramatically from being "meshed" into your wireless personal area network and the Matrix as a whole.

When an item has additional functionality when connected to the Matrix, it's described under the "Wireless" entry in the item's description. This functionality only applies when the device has access to the Matrix, which is most of the time unless your gamemaster says otherwise, like if you've entered a wireless static zone. If there is a Noise Rating from a situation that is greater than the item's Device Rating, not including distance, the item temporarily loses its wireless functionality (see **Noise**, p. 230).

These benefits only apply when the item's wireless mode is on. Your Ares Alpha can't auto-adjust for the wind direction and speed if it can't download local up-to-the-second weather conditions, and your Eurocar Westwind 3000 doesn't know the status of the next three traffic lights if it's not connected to GridGuide. A wireless device is always vulnerable to subversion and control by a hacker within wireless handshake range. You can defend your gear with a good commlink and a personal area network (see **PANs and WANs**, p. 233). Even better, defending against threats from the Matrix is part of your team hacker's job. If she's not available, you might occasionally want to turn wireless off.

TURNING IT OFF

Toggling an individual device's wireless functionality off is a Free Action, as is toggling all of your wireless devices to "wireless off." You lose wireless bonuses, but the items can no longer be wirelessly hacked. Otherwise, you can rely on your team's hacker to provide wireless defense to your personal area network and get the best of both worlds, keeping your wireless bonuses on while maintaining a defense from the digital world.

THROWBACKS

Some devices are **throwbacks,** devices that do not have wireless capability. While they still exist, they are becoming more and more rare in the 2070s. Throwbacks cannot be accessed by wireless connection, and so can neither be controlled remotely nor gain a wireless bonus.

If you consider a device's wireless link to be a nuisance, you can turn it into a throwback with a Hardware + Logic [Mental] (8, 10 minutes) Extended Test—or simply purchase the device as a throwback in the first place (always an option, though it may get you some funny looks).

While throwbacks are immune to hacking via the wireless Matrix, all devices have a universal access port. Devices can be connected with a data cable with little problem. If you've got a datajack, you can use its included spooled data filament to connect to a throwback directly, which means nothing is completely safe from a hacker with a datajack. Of course, if a hacker is able to sneak up to you and plug into your gun, you might have bigger problems than hacking attacks from the Matrix.

INCOMPATIBILITY

When two items are incompatible—like a shotgun and a laser sight, or wired reflexes and synaptic boosters—you cannot use the effects of both items at the same time. If one item of gear says it's incompatible and the other doesn't, they're incompatible. You can have both items if you want, you just have to pick what piece of gear to use at what time.

GEAR LISTING

The following seemingly exhaustive selection of gear is actually just a small sampling of the fun toys and crucial tools available through fixers, fences, gray markets, black markets, lore shops, and the Matrix. Future *Shadowrun* products will introduce even more items, and gamemasters are encouraged to come up with some of their own.

MELEE WEAPONS

Melee weapons are for ending the lives of people conveniently within arm's reach (see **Melee Combat**, p. 184). Some runners swear by them, especially those who prefer

to kill silently or are afraid of hackers bricking their guns. The damage value of most melee weapons is based on the wielder's Strength, modified by the weapon.

The game statistics of improvised melee weapons can be found in **Melee Combat** (p. 184), while implant weapons are found in **Cyber Implant Weapons** (p. 458).

BLADES

Use the Blades skill to wield these weapons.

Combat axe: A two-handed tungsten-alloy monster, available single- or double-bladed. A hardened thrusting point can be concealed, spring-loaded, in the handle. While it may seem barbaric or primitive, the physical augmentations of 2075 can make an old-school weapon like a combat axe even deadlier than a firearm in the right hands. So go ahead, go medieval.

Combat knife: A long, KA-BAR-style fighting knife with a blacked-out blade and a chisel point for punching through armor.

Forearm snap-blades: These are essentially like spurs, only they're external—painless to install or remove. A forearm sheath conceals three blades that can be extended or retracted via wireless link or muscle movement commands.

Wireless: Readying the forearm snap blades is a Free Action instead of a Simple Action.

Katana: The legendary two-handed sword of the samurai. The katana has become synonymous not just with street samurai, but with shadowrunners in general, at least in the trids; they've got everyone packing a katana, from the decker to the mage. But being a silly cliché doesn't make this blade any less dangerous, or less helpful in a fight.

Knife: Your basic, all-purpose street cutter. It comes in a bewildering array of styles, colors, and flavors, but the statistics don't vary from one to the next. Ordinary knives are used by the poor, the desperate, or the cautious as backup weapons.

Pole arm: This is, at its very essence, a blade on the end of a very long stick. It usually features an axe-head, glaive, spear point, or similar maiming implement. It's not easy to handle and it's just about impossible to conceal, but it's popular both with trolls and with melee combatants looking to safely keep said large trolls at more than arm's length.

Survival knife: A fine quality blade—smooth on one edge, serrated on the other—with several accessories, including a GPS monitor, mini-multitool, micro-lighter, and a hidden compartment in the handle. The sides of the steel are coated with a non-toxic chemical that blacks out the blade when inert to prevent unwanted reflection, but can be activated to provide two hours of phosphorescent light. All knives can cut flesh, but a survival knife is better at cutting rope and wood, or otherwise being used as a tool. The survival knife is the kind of gadget that no professional should be without.

Wireless: The knife displays an ARO of local maps, your GPS position, and can be used to make commcalls.

Sword: It's sharp, it's heavy, and it will fragging cut you wide open. Available in a wide variety of styles (wakizashi, seax, scimitar, *jian*, machete, and so on and so forth), this one-handed blade is not as formidable as a katana but is substantially easier to hide.

CLUBS

Use the Clubs skill to inflict blunt force trauma with these weapons.

Club: The weapon they named the skill after. These stats represent a range of objects, including an axe handle, baseball bat, wrench, crowbar, a tire iron, and a two-by-four with a rusty nail in it. There is a price listed, but it's not overly difficult to find one for free if you know where to look.

Extendable baton: This telescoping club can be collapsed, and it can be extended with a sharp flick of the wrist or a wireless signal. When retracted, it's more easily concealed (Concealability Modifier 0 when retracted, +2 when extended).

Wireless: Readying the extendable baton is a Free Action instead of a Simple Action.

Sap: Also called a blackjack, this is a small, springy club, or a flat piece of iron in a flexible leather covering. It's specially designed for concealment (Concealability Modifier -2).

Staff: This large, heavy stick is popular with magicians going for that traditional look. Available in composite, hardwood, high-carbon steel, and other materials.

Stun baton: A standard riot-control weapon, viewed as a tool and symbol of corporate-government oppressors but pragmatically useful to runners. It has ten charges and regains one charge per ten seconds when plugged in.

Wireless: The stun baton recharges by induction, regaining one charge per full hour of wireless-enabled time.

Telescoping staff: This is a metal and composite staff that can telescope down to a reasonable size, one that can be concealed about as easily as a stun baton or a sword. It can be extended and locked in place by whirling it at the correct speed and angle and twisting the grip, or via a wireless signal.

Wireless: Readying the telescoping staff is a Free Action instead of a Simple Action.

OTHER MELEE WEAPONS

These weapons require skills other than Blades or Clubs to use.

Knucks: These may be traditional fist-load weapons like brass knuckles, or modern "Hardliner gloves" with a thin layer of densiplast located along the knuckles and the edge of the hand. Either way they substantially boost the impact of a punch, making it potentially deadly. Attacks with knucks use the Unarmed Combat skill.

MELEE WEAPONS

BLADES	ACCURACY	REACH	DAMAGE	AP	AVAIL	COST
Combat axe	4	2	(STR + 5)P	–4	12R	4,000¥
Combat knife	6	—	(STR + 2)P	–3	4	300¥
Forearm snap-blades	4	—	(STR + 2)P	–2	7R	200¥
Katana	7	1	(STR + 3)P	–3	9R	1,000¥
Knife	5	—	(STR + 1)P	–1	—	10¥
Pole arm	5	3	(STR + 3)P	–2	6R	1,000¥
Survival knife	5	—	(STR + 2)P	–1	—	100¥
Sword	6	1	(STR + 3)P	–2	5R	500¥
CLUBS	**ACCURACY**	**REACH**	**DAMAGE**	**AP**	**AVAIL**	**COST**
Club	4	1	(STR + 3)P	—	—	30¥
Extendable baton	5	1	(STR + 2)P	—	4	100¥
Sap	5	—	(STR + 2)P	—	2	30¥
Staff	6	2	(STR + 3)P	—	3	100¥
Stun baton	4	1	9S(e)	–5	6R	750¥
Telescoping staff	4	2	(STR + 2)P	—	4	350¥
OTHER	**ACCURACY**	**REACH**	**DAMAGE**	**AP**	**AVAIL**	**COST**
Knucks	Physical	—	(STR + 1)P	—	2R	100¥
Monofilament whip	5 (7)	2	12P	–4	12F	10,000¥
Shock gloves	Physical	—	8S(e)	–5	6R	550¥

Monofilament whip: Iconic. Terrifying. Deadly. Few weapons on the street are more feared. This monofilament line can cut through bone and armor like hot butter. The line extends out to two meters, and retracts into the weapon's handle when not in use. The whip action, the weighted tip, and the deadly thread of the monofilament line itself make this weapon a potential danger to it's wielder. On a glitch, you catch the weighted tip on something nearby and need to disentangle it before you make another proper attack with it. On a critical glitch, you hit yourself with the whip and take its base damage (resisted normally). A monofilament whip requires the Exotic Melee Weapon (Monofilament Whip) skill to use.

Wireless: The whip can be readied with a Free Action, rather than a Simple Action, and the whip's built-in safety system retracts automatically instead of getting you entangled on a glitch. The Accuracy is also increased by 2.

Shock Gloves: These electrically insulated gloves have a wire mesh that discharges electric current with a punch or a simple touch. The gloves deal **electricity damage** (p. 170) and are good for ten charges before they need to be plugged in and recharged (at a rate of one charge per ten seconds). Attacks with shock gloves use the Unarmed Combat skill.

Wireless: The shock gloves recharge by induction, regaining one charge per full hour of wireless-enabled time.

PROJECTILE AND THROWING WEAPONS

These weapons are primarily muscle-powered, although some might use simple mechanical assistance for added distance or speed (see **Projectiles**, p. 181).

Bows: This could be a traditional longbow of fiberglass or wood, or possibly a modern compound-and-pulley bow. Both are archaic and rare weapons on the streets of 2075, and both have the advantage of being hacker-proof. Reloading a bow takes a Simple Action (**Ready Weapon**, p. 165).

Bows have ratings that indicate the minimum Strength you need to use that weapon. When attacking with a bow, a character whose Strength is less than the Strength minimum suffers a -3 dice pool modifier per point below the minimum; this penalty reflects the difficulty they have in pulling the bow and nocking an arrow. The weapon's Rating is also used to determine its range and damage (maximum Rating is 10). Use the lowest value of your Strength, the bow's rating, or the arrow Rating for range and damage when attacking a target, because your average Rating 10 titanium-sheathed beryllium-alloy bow tends to turn wood or fiberglass arrows into powder when they hit a target.

PROJECTILE WEAPONS

BOWS	ACCURACY	DAMAGE	AP	AVAIL	COST
Bow	6	(Rating + 2)P	–(Rating / 4)	Rating	Rating x 100¥
Arrow	—	—	—	Rating	Rating x 2¥
Injection arrow	—	—	—	(Rating + 2)R	Rating x 20¥
CROSSBOWS	**ACCURACY**	**DAMAGE**	**AP**	**AVAIL**	**COST**
Light	7	5P	–1	2	300¥
Medium	6	7P	–2	4R	500¥
Heavy	5	10P	–3	8R	1,000¥
Bolt	—	—	—	2	5¥
Injection bolt	—	—	—	8R	50¥
THROWING WEAPONS	**ACCURACY**	**DAMAGE**	**AP**	**AVAIL**	**COST**
Throwing knife/shuriken	Physical	(STR + 1)P	–1	4R	25¥

Crossbows: Modern crossbows are equipped with automatic reloading devices, so unless you're using a museum piece, reloading doesn't require a Ready Weapon action. Crossbows have internal magazines (m) holding up to 4 bolts. Crossbows are available in Light, Medium, and Heavy sizes.

Injection arrow/bolt: An injection bolt causes the same damage as a regular arrow or bolt, but also includes a payload of one dose of a drug or toxin. Effects depend on the drug payload, but to successfully deliver it, the attack must deal at least one box of damage after the Damage Resistance Test. This is an injection vector toxin attack.

Throwing knives/shuriken: A wide variety of shapes and sizes of aerodynamically balanced, specially weighted, muscle-powered throwing weapons are available, from throwing spikes to darts to *kunai* and shuriken. A character can ready (Agility ÷ 2) of these knives with one Ready Weapon action.

Wireless: If all the throwing knives or shuriken you throw in a single Combat Turn are wireless and you have a smartlink system, each knife you throw receives a +1 dice pool bonus per knife thrown that Combat Turn at your current target, as the knives inform and adjust for wind and other atmospheric conditions. So you'd get no bonus on the first throw, a +1 bonus on the second throw, a +2 bonus on the third throw, etc. (assuming you aimed all three knives at the same target).

FIREARMS

Cold steel that spits hot lead. Slug-throwing firearms are by far the most common weapons on the streets of 2075. Each weapon is chambered to take either old-fashioned cased ammunition or caseless ammo. Most firearms load caseless ammunition, with fewer and fewer models coming in variants able to handle cased ammunition. Sure, releasing a storm of shell casings when you hold down the trigger looks awesome, but it's impractical for the modern shadowrunner and their natural enemy, law enforcement and corporate security.

Firearms come with wireless capability and a digital ammunition counter. Ammunition (p. 433) is sold separately. All firearms have the following wireless bonuses in addition to any wireless bonuses on each model:

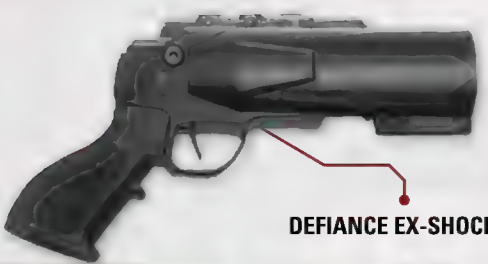
Wireless: The weapon displays an ARO that tells you ammo levels and ammo type loaded. If you have a DNI, you get two additional benefits. First, ejecting a clip (for weapons that have them) is a Free Action rather than a Simple Action. Second, changing fire modes (on models that have more than one) is a Free Action rather than a Simple Action.

TASERS

Tasers are legal to carry and a great choice for non-lethally incapacitating someone. Tasers, like other electrical weapons, have a flat Armor Penetration value of -5 and deal electricity damage. Use the Pistols skill to fire a taser. Tasers can take only top-mounted accessories.

Defiance EX Shocker: This heavy-duty taser fires up to 4 darts that trail wires up to 20 meters long. The wired connection to the battery allows for a more powerful shock. Most modern tasers use wireless darts, so the Defiance EX Shocker is an exception. It also features contacts that allow it to be used as a stun weapon in melee (Accuracy 3, DV 8S(e), Reach 0).

Wireless: A successful hit informs you of the status of the target's basic health (and Condition Monitors).



DEFIANCE EX-SHOCKER

FIREARMS

TASERS	ACC	DAMAGE	AP	MODE	RC	AMMO	AVAIL	COST
Defiance EX Shocker	4	9S(e)	-5	SS	—	4 (m)	—	250¥
Yamaha Pulsar	5	7S(e)	-3	SA	—	4 (m)	—	180¥
HOLD-OUTS	**ACC**	**DAMAGE**	**AP**	**MODE**	**RC**	**AMMO**	**AVAIL**	**COST**
Fichetti Tiffani Needler	5	8P(f)	+2	SA	—	4 (c)	5R	1,000¥
Streetline Special	4	6P	—	SA	—	6 (c)	4R	120¥
Walther Palm Pistol	4	7P	—	SS/BF	—	2 (c)	4R	180¥

Yamaha Pulsar: The darts of this taser contain wireless capacitors, meaning that the Pulsar eliminates the need for cumbersome wires. As a trade-off, it is slightly less powerful than the EX Shocker, although it can fire faster. It lacks the EX Shocker's melee contacts.

Wireless: A successful hit informs you of the status of the target's basic health (and Condition Monitors).

HOLD-OUTS

Hold-out pistols are very concealable and are perfect for sneaking into a meet or wearing as a back-up piece. They don't have much else going for them, being both weak and inaccurate. Use the Pistols skill when firing a hold-out pistol. Hold-outs can't take accessories.

Fichetti Tiffani Needler: Designed to appeal to social climbers and debutantes, the Tiffani Needler is available in a wide variety of colors and styles. It also has a special color-changing coating that can be manipulated via wireless signal. This is useful to make sure your gun matches with your shoes or your handbag. The Needler can only fire flechette rounds (already factored into its damage code).

Wireless: You can change the color of the Tiffani Needler with a Simple Action.

Streetline Special: Popular among society's dregs, the Streetline Special is a small, lightweight weapon made of composite materials. Magnetic Anomaly Detectors (see **MAD Scanner**, p. 446) suffer a -2 dice pool modifier to detect it.

STREETLINE SPECIAL

Walther Palm Pistol: This is a classic double-barreled derringer in an over-under barrel combination. It packs a punch for its size, but on the downside it has one of the most diminutive "magazine" capacities on the market—just one bullet per barrel. Both barrels can be fired at once as a short burst (see **Not Enough Bullets**, p. 180).

LIGHT PISTOLS

Light pistols are highly accurate and fairly concealable, occupying a comfortable middle ground between Hold-outs and Heavy Pistols. They're extremely common on the streets. Use the Pistols skill when firing a light pistol. Light pistols can take top- and barrel-mounted accessories.

Ares Light Fire 75: Designed based on one of the most common pistols on the market, the Light Fire is a weapon for special operators, not commonly available through legal channels. A special barrel-mounted silencer developed exclusively for the Light Fire comes attached, applying an additional -1 dice pool modifier to the modifier usually provided by silencers. In addition to its integral silencer, the Ares Light Fire 75 includes a smartgun system.

Ares Light Fire 70: The Ares Light Fire 70 is one of the most common pistols on the market. A special barrel-mounted silencer developed exclusively for the Light Fire 70 is available that gives you an additional -1 dice pool modifier to the usual -4 (for a total of -5); this silencer costs 750¥.

Beretta 201T: This light sidearm is used by many security professionals. It is capable of burst fire. Since the 201T is classified as a light pistol without further limitations, it is quite popular with security agencies in countries where heavy pistols and machine pistols are hard to come by legally. Semi-automatic bursts using the Beretta 201T require a Simple Action. The weapon includes a detachable shoulder stock.

Colt America L36: A venerable pistol with a great reputation. This basic firearm is cheap, easily concealed, and nearly ubiquitous. A perfect throwaway weapon.

COLT AMERICA L36

FIREARMS

LIGHT PISTOLS	ACC	DAMAGE	AP	MODE	RC	AMMO	AVAIL	COST
Ares Light Fire 75	6 (8)	6P	—	SA	—	16 (c)	6F	1,250¥
Ares Light Fire 70	7	6P	—	SA	—	16 (c)	3R	200¥
Beretta 201T	6	6P	—	SA / BF	(1)	21 (c)	7R	210¥
Colt America L36	7	7P	—	SA	—	11 (c)	4R	320¥
Fichetti Security 600	6 (7)	7P	—	SA	(1)	30 (c)	6R	350¥
Taurus Omni-6	5 (6)	6P / 7P	0 / –1	SA / SS	—	6 (cy)	3R	300¥
HEAVY PISTOLS	**ACC**	**DAMAGE**	**AP**	**MODE**	**RC**	**AMMO**	**AVAIL**	**COST**
Ares Predator V	5 (7)	8P	–2	SA	—	15 (c)	5R	725¥
Ares Viper Slivergun	4	9P (f)	+4	SA / BF	—	30 (c)	8F	380¥
Browning Ultra-Power	5 (6)	8P	–1	SA	—	10 (c)	4R	640¥
Colt Government 2066	6	7P	–1	SA	—	14 (c)	7R	425¥
Remington Roomsweeper	4	7P	–1	SA	—	8 (m)	6R	250¥
w/ flechettes	—	9P (f)	+4	—	—	—	—	—
Ruger Super Warhawk	5	9P	–2	SS	—	6 (cy)	4R	400¥

Fichetti Security 600: A light sidearm for security forces, this weapon's highly efficient feeding mechanism allows it a thirty-round magazine. The Fichetti Security 600 comes with a detachable folding stock and laser sight.

Taurus Omni-6: This reliable, rugged revolver is specially designed to handle a wide variety of ammunition. Popular with hobbyists and hand-loaders, the Omni-6 comes with some interchangeable cylinders so it can take either cased or caseless, light pistol or heavy pistol ammo. When firing light pistol rounds, the Omni-6 is semi-automatic (SA) and has a base DV of 6P, and when it fires heavy pistol ammo it has only single shot mode (SS), and a base DV of 7P and –1 AP. The Omni-6 includes an integral laser sight.

TAURUS OMNI-6

HEAVY PISTOLS

Heavy pistols are powerful sidearms that are a good compromise between concealability and firepower. When you shoot a heavy pistol, you use the Pistols skill. Heavy pistols can take top- and barrel- mounted accessories.

Ares Predator V: The newest iteration of the most popular handgun in the world, especially with mercenaries and shadowrunners. Upgraded with improved ergonomics and handling features, the Ares Predator V includes a smartgun system. Some say that the Ares Predator V isn't better than other guns in its class, but no one can argue that it has better brand recognition.

ARES PREDATOR V

Ares Viper Slivergun: The sleek Slivergun pairs the undeniably winning combo of burst-fire capability and built-in sound suppression (an integral silencer, p. 432) with its large magazine capacity. It fires metal slivers that count as flechette ammunition, which is factored into the weapon's damage code.

Browning Ultra-Power: This venerable sidearm is the Ares Predator's primary competition as the world's toughest heavy pistol. It offers a built-in top-mounted laser sight and is slightly cheaper.

Colt Government 2066: This government-issue weapon, styled after the legendary Colt M1911a1, uses an electrically induced spark to detonate the bullet's propellants. The removal of most moving parts from the firing mechanism gives this weapon a reputation for being exceptionally reliable.

Remington Roomsweeper: This is really more of a short-barreled shotgun than a pistol. When loaded with

FIREARMS

MACHINE PISTOLS	ACC	DAMAGE	AP	MODE	RC	AMMO	AVAIL	COST
Ares Crusader II	5 (7)	7P	—	SA / BF	2	40 (c)	9R	830¥
Ceska Black Scorpion	5	6P	—	SA / BF	(1)	35 (c)	6R	270¥
Steyr TMP	4	7P	—	SA / BF / FA	—	30 (c)	8R	350¥
SUBMACHINE GUNS	**ACC**	**DAMAGE**	**AP**	**MODE**	**RC**	**AMMO**	**AVAIL**	**COST**
Colt Cobra TZ-120	4 (5)	7P	—	SA / BF / FA	2 (3)	32 (c)	5R	660¥
FN P93 Praetor	4	8P	—	SA / BF / FA	1 (2)	50 (c)	11F	900¥
HK-227	5 (7)	7P	—	SA / BF / FA	(1)	28 (c)	8R	730¥
Ingram Smartgun X	4 (5)	8P	—	BF / FA	2	32 (c)	6R	695¥
SCK Model 100	5 (7)	8P	—	SA / BF	(1)	30 (c)	6R	875¥
Uzi IV	4 (5)	7P	—	BF	(1)	24 (c)	4R	450¥

shot rounds (flechette) rather than solid slugs, it uses Heavy Pistol ranges but shotgun rules (**Shotguns**, p. 180).

REMINGTON ROOMSWEEPER

Ruger Super Warhawk: This revolver is as loud as a jet liner and twice as shiny. It's also one of the scariest handguns in the world. The cased ammo variant is popular for the sheer thrill of swinging open the cylinder gate one handed and dumping spent brass.

MACHINE PISTOLS

Machine pistols offer a high rate of fire in a compact package. Use the Automatics skill to fire a machine pistol (characters may use the Pistols skill in Semi-Auto mode). Machine pistols can take top- and barrel-mounted accessories.

Ares Crusader II: A large magazine and easy handling make the Ares Crusader II one of the most popular weapons of its class. It features an integral barrel-mounted gas-vent 2 recoil compensation system and comes with an integral smartgun system.

Ceska Black Scorpion: This classic machine pistol provides concealable burst-fire capability. It comes equipped with an integral folding stock.

Steyr TMP: This lightweight polymer-frame pistol is capable of full autofire, but its light weight makes it hard to control when firing on full auto. It comes equipped with a built-in top-mounted laser sight.

SUBMACHINE GUNS

Use the Automatics skill when firing a submachine gun. SMGs can take top- and barrel-mounted accessories.

Colt Cobra TZ-120: With its unique design and wide range of accessories, the Colt Cobra series is quite popular both among security forces the world over and on the trids. The TZ-120 comes with a folding stock, top-mounted laser sight, and a barrel-mounted gas-vent 2 system.

FN P93 Praetor: This bullpup submachine gun was purpose-built for Corporate Court-controlled Interpol fast-response teams. Its special chamber system provides 1 point of Recoil Compensation, it has an integrated rigid stock, and a flashlight that can be used to reduce darkness penalties by one step (**Environmental Modifiers**, p. 173). Possession of the FN P93 while not a legitimate member of a Corporate Court force is a crime in most jurisdictions.

HK-227: The SMG of choice for many corporate and military security forces, the HK-227 boasts a retractable stock, smartgun system, and integral sound suppressor.

Ingram Smartgun X: Grade-A bang bang. Famous as the weapon of choice for many legendary street samurai since the 2050s, the Ingram Smartgun comes tricked out with a gas-vent 2 system, a smartgun system, and an integral sound suppressor.

INGRAM SMARTGUN X

FIREARMS

ASSAULT RIFLES	ACC	DAMAGE	AP	MODE	RC	AMMO	AVAIL	COST
AK-97	5	10P	–2	SA / BF / FA	—	38 (c)	4R	950¥
Ares Alpha	5 (7)	11P	–2	SA / BF / FA	2	42 (c)	11F	2,650¥
Grenade Launcher	4 (6)	—	—	SS	—	6 (c)	—	—
Colt M23	4	9P	–2	SA / BF / FA	—	40 (c)	4R	550¥
FN HAR	5 (6)	10P	–2	SA / BF / FA	2	35 (c)	8R	1,500¥
Yamaha Raiden	6 (8)	11P	–2	BF / FA	1	50 (c)	11F	2,600¥
SNIPER RIFLES	**ACC**	**DAMAGE**	**AP**	**MODE**	**RC**	**AMMO**	**AVAIL**	**COST**
Ares Desert Strike	7	13P	–4	SA	(1)	14 (c)	10F	17,500¥
Cavalier Arms Crockett EBR	6	12P	–3	SA / BF	(1)	20 (c)	12F	10,300¥
Ranger Arms SM-5	8	14P	–5	SA	(1)	15 (c)	16F	28,000¥
Remington 950	7	12P	–4	SS	—	5 (m)	4R	2,100¥
Ruger 100	6	11P	–3	SA	(1)	8 (m)	4R	1,300¥

SCK Model 100: Shin Chou Kyogo is synonymous with Japanese corporate security. Nearly every Japanacorp's security forces are issued the SCK 100, including Renraku's infamous Red Samurai. The SCK 100 features an internal smartgun system and a folding stock.

Uzi IV: This aging submachine gun is a worthy descendant of the famous Israeli weapon. The SMG features an integral folding stock and built-in top-mounted laser sight.

ASSAULT RIFLES

Use the Automatics skill when firing an assault rifle. Assault rifles can take top-, barrel-, and underbarrel-mounted accessories.

AK-97: The AK-97 is a legendary weapon with storied reliability—you can bury it for ten years, dig it up, and fire it immediately without a single problem. When all of the nano-fabricated AK-174s melted to slag, the AK-97s kept functioning just fine.

Ares Alpha: Specially designed for Ares Firewatch special forces, the Alpha has since become a multi-platinum best-selling success the world over, seeing use with UCAS Special Forces. In part, this is due to its exceptional brand awareness, and also because of its underbarrel grenade launcher, smartgun system, and an expensive chamber design that provides 2 points of Recoil Compensation.

Colt M23: This cheap, mass-produced, no-frills assault rifle is loved both by the gangbangers and pirates who can manage to get their hands on one and by the pros who are looking for something to modify from the ground up.

FN HAR: This assault rifle is supremely popular with private security forces and corporate threat-response teams. It features a laser sight and a gas-vent 2 system.

Yamaha Raiden: This electronic-firing assault rifle is state-of-the-art. The Raiden is very accurate and is quickly being adopted by japanacorp security forces and the Japanese Imperial Marines. It features an integral sound suppressor and smartgun system, and the electronic firing mechanism and design provides 1 point of Recoil Compensation.

YAMAHA RAIDEN

SNIPER RIFLES

Use the Longarms skill when firing sniper rifles. Firearm enthusiasts will be the first to tell you that sport and hunting rifles are technically not sniper rifles, but they are similar enough in terms of game statistics to be included here rather than in their own section. Sniper rifles can take top, barrel-, and underbarrel-mounted accessories.

Ares Desert Strike: This combat-hardened sniper rifle is intended for long-range shooting in harsh environments. That means it was built without materials or technologies prone to failure. It comes equipped with a rigid stock with shock pad and a detachable imaging scope.

Cavalier Arms Crockett EBR: Straddling the line between assault rifle and sniper rifle, the Crockett EBR features a burst fire mode. While it lacks the magazine capacity of a true assault rifle, and lacks the precision of

FIREARMS

SHOTGUNS	ACC	DAMAGE	AP	MODE	RC	AMMO	AVAIL	COST
Defiance T-250	4	10P	-1	SS / SA	—	5 (m)	4R	450¥
Enfield AS-7	4 (5)	13P	-1	SA / BF	—	10 (c) or 24 (d)	13F	1,000¥
PJSS Model 55	6	11P	-1	SS	(1)	2 (b)	9R	1,000¥
SPECIAL WEAPONS	**ACC**	**DAMAGE**	**AP**	**MODE**	**RC**	**AMMO**	**AVAIL**	**COST**
Ares S-III Super Squirt	3	Chemical	—	SA	—	20 (c)	7R	950¥
Fichetti Pain Inducer	3	Special	—	SS	—	Special	11R	5,000¥
Parashield Dart Pistol	5	as Drug/Toxin	—	SA	—	5 (c)	4R	600¥
Parashield Dart Rifle	5	as Drug/Toxin	—	SA	—	6 (m)	9R	1,200¥

a true marksman's weapon, it makes up for this in versatility, being able to switch fluidly between a sniping role and a combat role as easy as flipping a switch. It comes equipped with a rigid stock with shock pad and a detachable imaging scope.

CAVALIER ARMS CROCKETT EBR

Ranger Arms SM-5: A legendary assassin's weapon, this sniper rifle features a silencer, an imaging scope, and a rigid stock with shock pad. The SM-5 disassembles completely in order to fit into a standard briefcase; setting it up or breaking it down takes an Extended Firearms + Logic [Mental] (6, Complex Action) Test. While deadly, the SM-5 is fragile. At the end of every Combat Turn in which the weapon is used in a running firefight, reduce its Accuracy by 1 (to a minimum of 3). If the weapon is used in combat as a melee weapon or to defend from a melee attack, reduce its Accuracy by 2 (again to a minimum of 3). Recalibrating the weapon (a one-hour job) returns its Accuracy to normal.

Remington 950: This high-powered bolt-action hunting rifle features classic wooden furniture and a top-mounted imaging scope that have kept it popular with hunters for several decades. It cannot mount underbarrel accessories.

Ruger 101: This futuristic-looking gas-operated sporting rifle is the favorite weapon for many professional hunters and hobbyists. It features a built-in imaging scope and a rigid stock with shock pad.

SHOTGUNS

Use the Longarms skill when firing shotguns. The stats for these shotguns are for normal slug rounds. When firing shot, use the special rules for shotguns, choke settings, and flechette ammo (**Shotguns**, p. 180). Shotguns can take top, barrel, and underbarrel accessories.

Defiance T-250: A common sight on the mean streets when things escalate beyond pistols and knives, this semi-automatic shotgun is available in either a normal-length or short-barreled version. It is gas operated, but also features a secondary pump action for situations where preventing jams is more important than quickly firing a second shot. The short-barreled version has the Concealability of +4, the range of a heavy pistol, and a damage code of 9P.

Enfield AS-7: This military assault shotgun provides its user with massive firepower. As a close-quarters weapon and general combat gun, it is universally feared. It can either be loaded with ten-round ammo clips or a special twenty-four-round drum. The Enfield AS-7 comes equipped with a built-in, top-mounted laser sight.

PJSS Model 55: This is a weapon of classic style for a classic sport. Produced only in small numbers, it's renowned among European hunters and trap shooters as a precise and prestigious weapon. The weapon's rigid stock comes equipped with an integrated shock pad. Both barrels can be shot at once as a short burst (see **Not Enough Bullets**, p. 180).

PJSS MODEL 55

SPECIAL WEAPONS

Use the Exotic Ranged Weapon skill when firing these weapons.

Ares S-III Super Squirt: This popular non-lethal weapon fires DMSO gel packs. The dimethyl sulfoxide forces the skin to absorb the chemicals the operator wishes to deliver. The attack itself causes no damage,

FIREARMS

MACHINE GUNS	ACC	DAMAGE	AP	MODE	RC	AMMO	AVAIL	COST
Ingram Valiant	5 (6)	9P	-1	BF / FA	2 (3)	50 (c) or 100 (belt)	12F	5,800¥
Stoner-Ares M202	5	10P	-3	FA	—	50 (c) or 100 (belt)	12F	7,000¥
RPK HMG	5	12P	-4	FA	(6)	50 (c) or 100 (belt)	16F	16,300¥

but when the target is hit successfully, the DMSO delivers the substance directly into the target's bloodstream as a Contact vector toxin (**Toxins, Drugs, and BTLs**, p. 408). The Super Squirt uses Light Pistol ranges and can accept top- and underbarrel-mounted accessories

Fichetti Pain Inducer: For a non-lethal weapon, the Fichetti Pain Inducer is not very humane. It makes someone feel like they are in a microwave, roasting from the inside out. Treat this as a toxin attack with a Power of 8 and a speed of Immediate. The target resists with Body + Willpower. If the modified Power exceeds the target's Mental limit, the target must spend his next Action Phase doing whatever it takes to run away from the pain. The attacker can continue to hold her beam on a target with a Complex Action unless the gamemaster deems the target has dodged away or found cover. If the target cannot get out of the beam, he is incapacitated with pain, suffering a dice pool modifier equal to the modified Power on all tests for as long as the beam is trained on him.

The Pain Inducer uses SMG ranges and can take top and underbarrel accessories. It has ten charges; when attached to a power point, it reloads one charge every ten seconds.

Wireless: The Pain Inducer recharges by induction at a rate of 1 charge per hour.

Parashield Dart Pistol: The industry standard dart pistol, this fires injection darts (p. 434) with narcoject or another payload. The Parashield dart pistol uses Heavy Pistol ranges and can take top-mounted accessories.

Wireless: The dart reports whether or not it has struck home and successfully injected. It may also report any gross physical anomalies in the target's tissue, although its medical sensors are not very sophisticated (Device Rating of 1 for the dart).

Parashield Dart Rifle: Originally designed to non-lethally take down large game animals at long ranges, the Parashield dart rifle uses compressed air cartridges to fire injection darts. This weapon includes a top-mounted imaging scope. It uses sporting rifle ranges and can mount top and underbarrel accessories.

Wireless: The dart reports whether or not it has struck home and successfully injected. It may also report any gross physical anomalies in the target's tissue, although its medical sensors are not very sophisticated (Device Rating of 1 for the dart).

MACHINE GUNS

Machine guns come in three varieties—light, medium, and heavy—that determine their ranges. All, even the "light" ones, are in fact very heavy and large. A light machine gun is physically bigger and heavier than an assault rifle. MMGs and HMGs could be carried by someone with Strength of 8+ and 10+ (respectively), but they work better as vehicle-mounted weapons.

Use the Heavy Weapons skill when firing these weapons. They suffer from double modifiers for uncompensated recoil (**Recoil**, p. 175). Machine guns can take top, barrel, and underbarrel accessories.

Ingram Valiant: This legendary light machine gun is popular with mercenary units the world over. It comes with a rigid stock with shock pad, a laser sight, and a barrel-mounted gas-vent 2 system.

Stoner-Ares M202: This MMG packs a tremendous punch into a relatively lightweight framework made of extra-durable compounds. Due to its relatively small size, it's a very popular secondary weapon for heavy military vehicles. Trolls with no concept of subtlety sometimes deck them out with accessories for use as personal weapons.

RPK HMG: This heavy Russian machine gun is used by the militaries of several eastern European and Near East countries, primarily as a vehicle-mounted support weapon. Equipped with a detachable tripod, the RPK is usually fired from a prone, sitting, or kneeling position when not mounted on a vehicle.

CANNONS & LAUNCHERS

Use the Heavy Weapons skill when firing assault cannons and grenade and missile launchers. All suffer from double modifiers for uncompensated **recoil** (p. 175). Both assault cannons and launchers can take top and underbarrel accessories. Naturally, assault cannons use assault cannon ammo, grenade launchers fire minigrenades, and missile launchers launch missiles or rockets.

Ares Antioch-2: The Antioch-2 features a classic grenade launcher design combined with an integral

FIREARMS

CANNONS/LAUNCHERS	ACC	DAMAGE	AP	MODE	RC	AMMO	AVAIL	COST
Ares Antioch-2	4 (6)	Grenade	—	SS	—	8 (m)	8F	3,200¥
ArmTech MGL-12	4	Grenade	—	SA	—	12 (c)	10F	5,000¥
Aztechnology Striker	5	Missile	—	SS	—	1 (ml)	10F	1,200¥
Krime Cannon	4	16P	-6	SA	[illegible]	[illegible]	20F	21,000¥
Onotari Interceptor	4 (6)	Missile	—	SS	—	2 (ml)	18F	14,000¥
Panther XXL	5 (7)	17P	-6	SS	—	15 (c)	20F	43,000¥

smartlink system. It is one of the more affordable grenade launchers on the market.

Wireless: You can use the wireless link trigger for your grenades, even if you don't have DNI (**Direct Neural Interface sidebar,** p. 222).

ArmTech MGL-12: This bullpup-configuration grenade launcher is popular, since it can fire in semi-auto mode and carries substantially more minigrenades than its competitors.

Wireless: You can use the wireless link trigger for your grenades, even if you don't have DNI (**Direct Neural Interface sidebar,** p. 222).

Aztechnology Striker: The Striker is an extremely light disposable launcher—perfect when you want to deliver a punch and make a quick, unencumbered getaway.

Wireless: You can use the wireless link trigger for your missiles, even if you don't have DNI (**Direct Neural Interface sidebar,** p. 222).

Krime Cannon: Krime may be a small-time manufacturer, but their assault cannon, simply called the Cannon, is a cheap heavy weapon big on attitude and firepower. It comes standard with modification for trolls, and so is the first weapon in the Sixth World to be intended for larger customers.

KRIME CANNON

Onotari Interceptor: This Saeder-Krupp-developed military missile launcher is designed to fire rockets or guided missiles, of any type. It has two separate barrels and firing chambers, and can load up to two missiles at once, which need not be of the same type. Due to backblast issues, it is not capable of "giving 'em both barrels." It features an internal smartgun system.

Wireless: You can use the wireless link trigger for your missiles, even if you don't have DNI (**Direct Neural Interface sidebar,** p. 222).

Panther XXL: This huge fragging gun is an assault cannon that uses ammunition similar to the primary weapon in many small tanks. It comes with a built-in smartgun system.

FIREARM ACCESSORIES

Most firearm accessories must be attached to a particular mount—top, barrel, underbarrel. Each mount can only hold one accessory at a time.

Airburst link: This grenade/rocket launcher smartgun accessory uses a "smart" rangefinder to air-burst the explosive projectile at a point deemed to be both a safe distance from the launcher and within the closest possible proximity to the target. An airburst link reduces the scatter distance for a launched grenade by two meters per net hit instead of by one meter per hit (**Determine Scatter**, p. 182) when you use the wireless link trigger.

Wireless: An airburst link requires wireless functionality to function at all. Both the grenades and the launcher must have wireless mode turned on.

Bipod: This two-legged brace extends downward from the weapon, allowing it to be fired low to the ground with the user in a prone or sitting position. A bipod can be attached to the underbarrel mount of a weapon and provides 2 points of Recoil Compensation when properly deployed. Attaching a bipod takes one minute. Folding up or deploying a bipod is a Simple Action. Removing it is a Complex Action.

Wireless: Folding up or deploying the bipod is a Free Action.

Concealable holster: This small holster can be worn on the ankle, clipped to the forearm, in the small of the back, or anywhere else it's unlikely to be seen. The concealable holster adds -1 to the item's Concealability (p. 419). Only pistols and tasers fit in a Concealable Holster.

Wireless: Wireless sensors and a smart-fabric coated weave allow the holster to alter color and texture in real time adding an additional -1 to the item's Concealability.

Gas-vent system: Gas-vent recoil compensation systems are barrel-mounted accessories that vent a weap-

FIREARM ACCESSORIES

ACCESSORY	MOUNT	AVAILABILITY	COST
Airburst link	—	6R	600¥
Bipod	Under	2	200¥
Concealable holster	—	2	150¥
Gas-vent system (Rating 1-3)	Barrel	(Rating x 3)R	Rating x 200¥
Gyro mount	Under	7	1,400¥
Hidden arm slide	—	4R	350¥
Imaging scope	Top	2	300¥
Laser sight	Top or Under	2	125¥
Periscope	Top	3	70¥
Quick-draw holster	—	4	175¥
Shock pad	—	2	50¥
Silencer/suppressor	Barrel	4F	500¥
Smart firing platform	Under	12F	2,500¥
Smartgun system, internal	—	1+2R	(Weapon Cost) x 2¥
Smartgun system, external	Top or Under	4R	200¥
Spare clip	—	4	5¥
Speed loader	—	2	25¥
Tripod	Under	4	500¥

on's barrel gases at a specific vector to counter muzzle climb. Once installed, a gas-vent cannot be removed. Gas-vent systems provide a number of points of Recoil Compensation equal to their rating.

Gyro mount: This heavy upper-body harness features an attached, articulated, motorized gyro-stabilized arm that mounts an assault rifle or a heavy weapon. The system neutralizes up to 6 points of recoil and movement modifiers. Attaching or removing a weapon from the mount takes a Simple Action. Putting on a gyro-mount harness takes about five minutes, while the quick-release allows you to get out of it with a Complex Action.

Wireless: Activating the harness's quick-release with a wireless signal to exit the harness is a Free Action.

Hidden arm slide: Attached to the forearm and worn under clothing, this slide can accommodate a pistol-sized weapon. It can fit a hold-out, light pistol, or taser. With a hand gesture, the slide releases the weapon/object right into your hand. If you quick draw the weapon in this slide, the threshold for the quick draw is 2. It also gives the weapon a -1 Concealability modifier.

Wireless: You can ready the weapon in the slide as a Free Action.

Imaging scope: These classic scopes are attached to the top mount; attaching or removing them takes only a Simple Action. Imaging scopes include a micro camera and vision magnification, and they have a Capacity of 3 to hold vision enhancements (p. 444).

Wireless: The scope's "line of sight" can be shared, allowing you to share what your scope sees with your team (and yourself if you're using it to look around a corner).

Laser sight: This device uses a laser beam to project a visible dot (in your choice of colors) on the target. This increases the weapon's Accuracy by 1, which is not cumulative with smartlink modifiers. The laser sight can be attached to either the underbarrel mount or top mount. Activating or deactivating a laser sight is a Simple Action.

Wireless: The wireless laser sight provides a +1 dice pool bonus on attack tests, not cumulative with smartlink modifiers. Activating and deactivating the laser sight is a Free Action.

Periscope: This adjustable "off-axis" viewer attaches to a top mount and allows an operator to target a weapon around corners, reducing the usual -3 dice pool penalty to -2. A periscope can be upgraded with any of the vision enhancements noted on p. 444.

Wireless: The dice pool penalty for shooting around corners is reduced to -1.

Quick-draw holster: This easy access holster can hold any weapon of Machine Pistol or smaller size. It reduces the threshold for quick-drawing the holstered weapon by 1 (see **Quick Draw**, p. 165).

Shock pad: A shock-absorbing pad is situated on the rigid stock of a rifle, shotgun, or heavy weapon, and provides 1 point of recoil compensation.

Silencer/suppressor: This barrel-mounted accessory reduces the sound and flash of a weapon's discharge. It cannot be used with revolvers or shotguns. It applies a -4 dice pool modifier on all Perception Tests to notice the weapon's use or locate the weapon's firer. Attaching or removing a silencer takes a Complex Action.

Wireless: The silencer/suppressor features a Rating 2 microphone with Rating 2 Select Sound Filter and simple software that alerts you via AR if your silencer detects the sound of someone nearby reacting to the sound of the silenced weapon.

AMMUNITION

AMMO, PER 10 SHOTS	DAMAGE MODIFIER	AP MODIFIER	AVAILABILITY	COST
APDS	—	–4	12F	120¥
Assault cannon	—	—	12F	[illegible]
Explosive rounds	+1	–1	9F	80¥
Flechette rounds	[illegible]	[illegible]	6R	[illegible]
Gel rounds	+0S	+1	2R	25¥
Hollow points	[illegible]	[illegible]	4F	[illegible]
Injection darts	—	—	4R	75¥
Regular ammo	—	—	[illegible]	[illegible]
Stick-n-Shock	–2S (e)	–5	6R	80¥
Tracer	—	—	[illegible]	[illegible]
Taser dart	—	—	3	50¥

Smart firing platform: This is a non-mobile robotic tripod equipped with a remote control pivot that allows for a 180-degree firing arc and a 60-degree inclination. You can mount one smartgun-equipped weapon to the platform, and it will be fired by the device's onboard Pilot (Device Rating 3). The platform is equipped with a Targeting Autosoft (Rating 3) and can be upgraded with additional autosofts, usually a Clearsight program. You need to set the parameters of who exactly the platform should and shouldn't shoot at, which are followed by the platform's pilot (**Pilot Programs**, p. 269). The platform provides 5 points of Recoil Compensation. It has an Initiative attribute of Pilot x 2 and 4D6 Initiative Dice when acting autonomously (see **Drone Initiative**, p. 270).

Wireless: You can fire the mounted weapon remotely (**Control Device**, p. 238), like a drone with no rigger interface. You can use an implanted smartlink with the smartgun if you're in VR.

Smartgun system: This connects a firearm or a projectile weapon directly to the user's smartlink. Incorporating a small camera and laser range finder, the smartlink keeps track of ammunition, heat buildup, and material stress. If you have a smartlink, you can mentally switch between gun modes, eject a clip, and fire the gun without pulling the trigger. The camera lets you shoot around corners without exposing yourself to return fire (at a -3 dice pool penalty). The system makes use of advanced calculation software, allowing for precisely calculated trajectories and high precision over any distance.

If you're using a smartlink, the smartgun system increases the gun's Accuracy by 2. The smartgun features are accessed either by universal access port cable to an imaging device (like glasses, goggles, or a datajack for someone with cybereyes) or by a wireless connection working in concert with direct neural interface.

Retrofitting a firearm with an internal smartgun system doubles the weapon's price and adds 2 to its Availability. An external smartgun system can be attached to the top mount or underbarrel mount with an Armorer + Logic (4, 1 hour) Extended Test. The small camera has a capacity of 1 and can be equipped with vision enhancements (p. 444).

Wireless: A wireless smartlink provides a dice pool bonus to all attacks with the weapon: +1 if you're using gear with a smartlink or +2 if you're using an augmentation for which you paid Essence. Ejecting a clip and changing fire modes are Free Actions.

Spare clip: A spare clip comes unloaded but can hold the maximum rounds for the weapon. Each clip is specific to the weapon you buy it for, but they all cost the same. And yes, it's technically a detachable box magazine, but the Cityspeak word for it is so popular these days that even the catalogs call them clips.

Speed loader: The speed loader is a simple device that holds a ring of bullets for fast insertion into a revolver's cylinder. Each speed loader is specific to the weapon it was designed for. It lets you fully reload a revolver as a Complex Action instead of having to load rounds one at a time (**Reloading Weapons** table, p. 163).

Tripod: The tripod provides a stable base to fire a weapon low to the ground with the user kneeling or sitting. A tripod can be attached to the underbarrel mount and provides 6 points of Recoil Compensation when properly deployed. Attaching a tripod takes one minute. Folding up or deploying the bipod is a Free Action.

Wireless: Folding up, deploying, or removing the tripod is a Free Action.

AMMUNITION

Ammunition is defined by type (regular, gel, APDS, etc.), class of firearm (light pistol, heavy pistol, assault rifle, etc.) and as cased or caseless. Unless indicated otherwise in its description, a gun can fire cased or caseless ammo, but not both.

For simplicity, each kind of gun can trade ammo with another of its class: for example, all heavy pistols can share ammo.

AMMUNITION

GRENADES	DAMAGE	AP	BLAST	AVAILABILITY	COST
Flash-bang	10S	-4	10m Radius	6R	100¥
Flash-pak	Special	—	Special	4	125¥
Fragmentation	18P (f)	+5	–1/m	11F	100¥
High explosive	16P	-2	–2/m	11F	100¥
Gas	as Chemical	—	10m Radius	2 + Chemical Availability	40¥ + Chemical cost
Smoke	—	—	10m Radius	4R	40¥
Thermal, smoke	—	—	10m Radius	6R	60¥

An ammunition type's Damage Modifier and AP Modifier are added to the weapon's usual DV and AP. For example, an Ares Predator V (DV 8P, AP -1) loaded with explosive rounds (DV +1, AP -1) has a DV of 9P and Armor Penetration of -2.

APDS rounds: These are military-grade armor piercing rounds—their full name is armor piercing discarding sabot. They are designed to travel at high velocities and punch through personal body armor.

Assault cannon rounds: These are for assault cannons only, and they're the only thing assault cannons can load.

Explosive rounds: These slugs carry a shaped-charge explosive, designed to explode and fragment on impact. Explosive rounds misfire whenever you roll a critical glitch. When this happens, you must resist one "attack" with a Damage Value equal to the normal damage done by the weapon (and don't forget the modifier for the explosive rounds). The attack misses its intended target, and the weapon firing the bullets is destroyed.

Flechette rounds: The payload of a flechette round is made up of tiny, tightly packed metal slivers. The round breaks up and shatters on impact, becoming a tumbling hail of shrapnel. Flechette rounds are devastating against unprotected targets, but not as effective against hardened armor.

Gel rounds: These less-lethal rounds use a hard, jelly-like substance that is a safer alternative to rubber bullets. They are often employed for riot control. Their usually semi-rigid slugs flatten on impact, disbursing their kinetic energy over a larger-than-normal area. Gel rounds inflict Stun damage (AP +1). Gel rounds reduce the target's Physical limit by 2 when checking for knockdown (**Knockdown**, p. 194).

Hollow point rounds: Hollow point or dum dum rounds have their tips indented, so they are designed to "mushroom" or expand on impact, becoming a hail of deadly fragments not unlike flechettes, although hollow points are a much older technology. Like flechettes, hollow points work better on unarmored targets and tend to flatten against armor.

Injection darts: For use with dart guns of various types, like the Parashield pistol and rifle. Each injection dart carries a single dose of a drug or toxin (sold separately). The effect of the dart depends on the drug payload, but to successfully deliver that payload, the attack with the dart must get at least one net hit against an unarmored target or three net hits against a target with armor. This is an injection vector toxin attack.

Regular ammo: Also called ball or full metal jacket rounds, these solid slugs are useful for numerous applications (mainly killing things).

Stick-n-Shock: Stick-n-Shock rounds deal electrical Stun damage of equal to the damage of the base weapon -2. They have a flat AP of -5 that replaces the weapon's AP instead of stacking with it.

Tracer rounds: Tracer ammo burns along the line of flight, making it easier for the shooter to home in on the target. This type of ammunition can only be used in Full Auto weapons and, being loaded as every third round in a clip, is an exception to the restriction of one type of ammunition per clip. They improve the Accuracy of your gun by 1 when you fire more than one round in an Action Phase (cumulative with a laser sight but not a smartgun).

Taser dart: These darts are designed to be loaded into taser weapons.

GRENADES, ROCKETS, AND MISSILES

GRENADES

Grenades are small, self-contained explosive packages. Minigrenades are grenades specifically designed for use with grenade launchers, set to arm when they have traveled 5 meters from their point of origin and explode on impact (unless using an airburst link, p. 431). This safety feature can be disabled with an Armorer + Logic [Mental] (4, 5 Minutes) Extended Test. Minigrenades have the same cost and effects as standard grenades.

Use the Throwing Weapons skill when throwing grenades, or Heavy Weapons when launching a grenade

GRENADES/ROCKETS/MISSILES

GRENADES	DAMAGE	AP	BLAST	AVAILABILITY	COST
Flash-bang	10S	–4	10m Radius	6R	100¥
Flash-pak	Special	—	Special	4	125¥
Fragmentation	18P (f)	+5	–1/m	11F	100¥
High explosive	16P	–2	–2/m	11F	100¥
Gas	as Chemical	—	10m Radius	2 + Chemical Availability	40¥ + Chemical cost
Smoke	—	—	10m Radius	4R	40¥
Thermal smoke	—	—	10m Radius	6R	60¥
ROCKETS	**DAMAGE**	**AP**	**BLAST**	**AVAILABILITY**	**COST**
Anti-vehicle	24P	–4 / –10	–4/m	18F	2,800¥
Fragmentation	23P (f)	+5	–1/m	12F	2,000¥
High-explosive	21P	–2	–2/m	18F	2,100¥
MISSILES	**DAMAGE**	**AP**	**BLAST**	**AVAILABILITY**	**COST**
As Rocket	As Rocket	As Rocket	As Rocket	+4	+Sensor rating x 500¥

from a grenade launcher. Follow the rules for **Grenades**, p. 181. Grenades and similar explosives can also be rigged with a tripwire to set up as a basic booby-trap. This requires an Extended Demolitions + Logic [Mental] (8, 1 Complex Action) Test. In addition to any other wireless bonus, all grenades have the following wireless feature (use it with caution):

Wireless: You can use the wireless link trigger for your grenades, even if you don't have DNI (**Direct Neural Interface sidebar,** p. 222).

Flash-bang grenades: Upon detonation, these "concussion" or "stun" grenades explode to create a bright, loud, shocking blast distributed equally over a radius of 10 meters.

Flash-pak: Not a grenade per se, this is an electronic unit the size of a pack of cigarettes containing four quartz-halogen micro-flashes designed to fire in random strobing sequence to blind opponents. Anyone looking in the direction of a flash-pak receives a -4 dice pool penalty on attack tests due to the strobing (flare compensation goggles, glasses, etc. reduce this modifier to -2, while flare compensation in cybereyes or as a retinal modification reduces this modifier to -1). The flash-pak has 10 charges; when activated it uses one charge per Combat Turn. When plugged in, it recharges one charge every 10 seconds.

Wireless: The strobe sequence can avoid directing strong flashes at the subscribed character; they suffer only half glare penalties from the flash-pak, rounded down. It can recharge by induction, regaining one charge per hour.

Fragmentation grenade: These classic killing devices are designed to spread a cloud of deadly shrapnel over a large area, seriously injuring soft targets.

High-explosive grenade: These grenades are designed to deliver a large blast and concentrated hurt.

Gas Grenade: Instead of exploding, the gas grenade releases a cloud of gas over an area with a radius of 10 meters. This is usually riot control/CS gas, but many other chemical or toxin payloads can be chosen (**Toxins, Drugs, and BTLs**, p. 408). The cloud lasts for approximately 4 Combat Turns (less in windy areas, longer in confined areas with poor ventilation, at the gamemaster's discretion).

Smoke: Similar to the gas grenade, a smoke grenade releases a cloud of smoke over an area with a diameter of 10 meters. The cloud obscures vision, applying visibility modifiers for smoke to relevant tests (p. 174). The cloud lasts for approximately 4 Combat Turns (less in windy areas, longer in confined areas with poor ventilation, at the gamemaster's discretion).

Thermal smoke: Identical to a smoke grenade, except that the smoke contains hot particles designed to obscure thermographic vision. Apply the visibility modifiers for thermal smoke (p. 174). The cloud lasts for approximately 4 Combat Turns (less in windy areas, longer in confined areas with poor ventilation, at the GM's discretion).

ROCKETS AND MISSILES

Rockets are projectiles consisting of a light metal or plastic body with stabilizing fins, a propulsion system (usually solid-chemical) and a warhead. Missiles are rockets that carry internal guidance systems, making them more expensive than standard "dumb" rockets.

Rules for firing rockets and missiles are on p. 181. Rockets and missiles are set to arm when they have traveled 10 meters from their point of origin and explode on impact. This safety feature can be disabled with an Armorer + Logic [Mental] (4, 5 Minutes) Extended Test. In addition to any other wireless bonus, all rockets and missiles have the following wireless feature:

CLOTHING AND ARMOR

CLOTHING	ARMOR RATING	AVAIL	COST
Clothing	0	—	20¥-100,000¥
Electrochromic modification	—	[illegible]	+500¥
Feedback clothing	—	8	+500¥
(Synth)Leather	4	—	+200¥
ARMOR	**ARMOR RATING**	**AVAIL**	**COST**
Actioneer Business Clothes	[illegible]	[illegible]	1,500¥
Armor clothing	6	2	450¥
Armor jacket	[illegible]	[illegible]	1,000¥
Armor vest	9	4	500¥
Chameleon suit	[illegible]	[illegible]	1,700¥
Full body armor	15	14R	2,000¥
Full helmet	+3	—	+500¥
Chemical seal	—	+6	+6,000¥
Environment adaptation	—	[illegible]	+1,000¥
Lined coat	9	4	900¥
Urban Explorer Jumpsuit	[illegible]	[illegible]	650¥
Helmet	+2	—	+100¥

EXPLOSIVES

TYPE, PER KG	RATING	AVAIL	COST
Commercial	5	8R	100¥
Foam	6-25	12F	Rating x 100¥
Plastic	6-25	16F	Rating x 100¥
ACCESSORIES	**RATING**	**AVAIL**	**COST**
Detonator cap	—	8R	75¥

Wireless: You can use the wireless link trigger for your rocket or missile, even if you don't have DNI (**Direct Neural Interface sidebar,** p. 222).

Anti-vehicle: AV rockets/missiles contain a shaped-charge warhead designed to burn or punch its way through a vehicle or barrier. Though the impact causes a blast, it is limited compared to that of a High-Explosive projectile. AV attacks have an AP of -10 against vehicles and barriers, -4 against other targets.

Fragmentation: Used principally against people, the warhead discharges high-speed metal or plastic-metal fragments designed to tear into unprotected flesh. These rockets/missiles are very effective against unprotected individuals, but fairly ineffective against barriers, structures, and vehicles.

High explosive: HE rockets/missiles are designed to do heavy damage to a large area. Their blast pattern is similar to that of a grenade, but much larger. They are not particularly effective against hardened targets, such as vehicles or protected military structures. HE weapons use the standard grenade rules for determining the blast and its effects.

EXPLOSIVES

Explosives are primarily used to damage structures. You can use the Demolitions skill to prepare explosives, identify key or weak structural points, and focus the blast. Each hit on a Demolitions + Logic [Mental] Test adds 1 to the explosive's effective rating. See **Barriers,** p. 194, for calculating an explosive's effect on a barrier.

An explosive's Damage Value is calculated as its Rating (modified by the Demolitions Test, if you made one) times the square root of the number of kilograms used (rounded down). The Blast value for a circular explosion is -2 per meter, while the Blast value for a directional explosion (up to 60 degrees in a specific direction) is -1 per meter. When explosives are attached directly to a target, the target's armor is halved; otherwise the explosive has an AP value of -2.

If an explosion destroys a barrier, it creates a cloud of deadly shrapnel that threatens an area far bigger than the actual blast—the shrapnel blast has a DV equal to the explosive's DV minus the Structure rating of the barrier, with a Blast of -1/m.

Commercial explosives: A range of explosive compounds, both solid and liquid, are available to the construction industry for all their destructive needs.

Plastic explosives: These highly stable moldable, and adhesive explosive compounds are military grade. They're ideal for certain jobs, like breaching walls. They are usually color-tinted to indicate the level of current needed to detonate them, from the black of magnetic-field induction to the chalky white of 440-volt industrial explosives.

Explosive foam: Plastic explosives with the consistency of shaving cream, stored in an aerosol can. Perfect for spraying into crevices, and detonated the same way as regular plastic explosives.

Detonator cap: This detonator is inserted into a mass of explosives and set off either by a programmable timer or radio signal. Setting the timer takes a Complex Action.

Wireless: You can set the detonator's timer with a Simple Action. You can also set it off without a countdown as a Free Action.

CLOTHING AND ARMOR

In 2075, you'd have to be crazy to consider walking outside with just a tee-shirt and jeans, even in some of the nicer parts of the Sprawl. You need protection: from the acid rain, from air pollution, from ultraviolet radiation from the completely fragged ozone layer, and of course, from random street violence.

Clothing: Clothing in 2075 comes with amazing features you'll likely completely take for granted. Commlinks, music players, and other electronic devices can be woven right into the fabric, powered by interwoven batteries or special energy-gathering fabrics. On the other side of the economy, cheap soy-based "flats" can be had for five nuyen per article of clothing from vending machines around the Sprawl. The more money you spend on your threads, the more impressive you look.

Electrochromic clothing: Electrochromic threads can change color with voltage, letting you alter the color of your clothing or display text, images, or patterns. This is good for fashion, but great for vanishing into a crowd if you need a quick costume change. You can even get armored clothing in electrochromic styles. It takes a Simple Action to change the settings on your electrochromic clothes, but a couple of Combat Turns to complete the change.

Wireless: Changing your clothes' settings is a Free Action, and while it's not good enough to be camouflage, it can display images, text files, or flat video from your commlink.

Feedback clothing: This haptic clothing allows for a tactile component to an augmented reality experience.

Leather jacket/duster: Usually made of synthleather unless you've got mad nuyen, this type of jacket (waist-length to duster) never goes out of style and even offers a modicum of protection. Just don't expect it to stop bullets.

ARMOR

Advances in ballistic fabrics from spiderweave venlar threads to ceramic-titanium composite plates enable modern armor to be lightweight, flexible, and concealable. For game rules dealing with armor, see p. 168.

Actioneer Business Clothes: A discreetly armored "power suit" is a popular choice among Mr. Johnsons, faces, and fixers looking for a little high-class protection coupled with style. It features a concealable holster (**Firearm Accessories**, p. 431) in the jacket.

Armor clothing: Lightweight ballistic fiber weave makes these garments almost impossible to detect as armor. It doesn't provide as much protection as real armor, but it's available in a wide variety of styles.

Armor jacket: The most popular armor solution on the streets comes in all styles imaginable. It offers good protection without catching too much attention. But don't think of wearing one to a dinner party.

Armor vest: This modern flexible-wrap vest is designed to be worn under regular clothing without displaying any bulk. A popular and cost-effective option.

Chameleon suit: This full-body suit has a smart ruthenium polymer coating supported by a sensor suite; the technology allows it to scan its surroundings and replicate the images at the proper perspectives. Add 2 to your limit when you make Sneaking tests to hide. A chameleon suit is also armored for the wearer's protection.

Wireless: The suit uses the extra information about your surroundings and also gives you a +2 dice pool bonus to Sneaking Tests for hiding.

Full body armor: Impossible to conceal, this armor is worn by military and security personnel around the world for heavy ops duty. It is styled for intimidation as well as ease of movement, with a full array of tactical holsters, pouches, and webbing, and is certain to draw attention. The suit can be modified for environmental adaptation (hot or cold environments) or chemically sealed to completely protect the wearer from toxic environments and attacks. The suit's helmet has a Capacity of 6 for the purpose of being equipped with vision or audio enhancements.

Lined coat: This Wild West style duster has been consistently popular on the mean streets of the world's sprawls for the past thirty years. Besides its protective traits, the armored trenchcoat provides an additional –2 Concealability modifier to items hidden underneath.

Urban Explorer Jumpsuit: Designed for couriers, athletes, and freerunners, these colorful jumpsuits are well ventilated and breathable but surprisingly protective with lightweight densiplast and liquid reactive armor. Urban explorer jumpsuits feature a built-in music player and biomonitor.

ARMOR MODIFICATIONS

Any piece of worn armor can be upgraded with a range of modifications. The Capacity of a piece of armor is equal to its Armor Rating. Armor modifications have variable Capacity costs. Each modification also has a rating between 1 and 6, except as noted.

Chemical protection: Water-resistant, non-porous, impermeable materials, and a coating of neutralizing agents protect the wearer against contact-vector chemical attacks (**Toxins, Drugs and BTLs**, p. 408). Add the rating of the Chemical Protection modification to tests made to resist contact-vector toxin attacks.

Chemical seal: Available only to full body armor that includes a helmet, the chemical seal is an airtight environmental control that takes a Complex Action to activate (if you're already wearing the armor, natch). It provides complete protection against contact and inhalation vector chemicals, but can only be used for a total of an hour (the limit of the air supply) at a time.

Wireless: Activating the chemical seal is a Free Action.

Fire resistance: Fire-retardant, nonflammable materials protect the wearer against Fire damage (p. 171). Add the full rating of the Fire Resistance modification to the Armor value when resisting Fire attacks or checking if the armor catches fire.

Insulation: Thermal fibers and heat-retentive materials protect the wearer against Cold damage (p. 170). Add the full rating of the Insulation modification to the Armor value when resisting Cold attacks.

ARMOR

MODIFICATION	CAPACITY	AVAIL	COST
Chemical Protection	[Rating]	6	Rating x 250¥
Chemical Seal	6	12R	3,000¥
Fire Resistance	[Rating]	6	Rating x 250¥
Insulation	[Rating]	6	Rating x 250¥
Nonconductivity	[Rating]	6	Rating x 250¥
Shock Frills	2	6R	250¥
Thermal Damping	[Rating]	10R	Rating x 500¥

ARMOR

HELMETS/SHIELDS	ARMOR RATING	AVAIL	COST
Helmet	+2	2	100¥
Ballistic shield	+6	12R	1,200¥
Riot shield	+6	10R	1,500¥

EXOTIC MELEE WEAPON	ACCURACY	REACH	DAMAGE	AP
Ballistic shield	4	—	(STR + 2)S	—
Riot shield	4	—	9S(e)	–5

Nonconductivity: Electrical insulation and non-conductive materials protect the wearer against Electricity damage (p. 170). Add the full rating of this modification to the Armor value when resisting Electricity attacks.

Shock frills: These strips of "fur" are electrically charged when activated, standing on end and inflicting Electricity damage to anyone that touches you. Use Unarmed Combat to attack with the frills. The frills hold 10 charges; when attached to a power point, they recharge one charge per 10 seconds.

Wireless: The shock frills can be activated or deactivated as a Free Action. They can also recharge by induction, recharging one charge per hour.

Thermal damping: Designed to reduce your thermal signature, these inner layers capture or bleed heat, so the outer layers maintain a surface temperature equal to the surrounding air. Add the rating to your limit on any Sneaking test against thermographic vision or thermal sensors.

Wireless: The suit uses the extra information about your surroundings and also gives you its rating as a dice pool bonus to Sneaking tests against heat-based detection.

HELMETS AND SHIELDS

Instead of counting as separate pieces of armor, helmets and shield modify the rating of worn armor by their Rating (**Armor and Encumbrance**, p. 169).

Due to the awkwardness of holding a shield, if you're using one you take a -1 modifier to your Physical limit when you do something where the shield might get in the way (though not attacks made using the shield as a weapon). Shields may be upgraded with the chemical protection, fire resistance, and nonconductivity armor modifications and have a Capacity equal to their Armor Rating for this purpose.

Helmet: Helmets come in a wide variety of shapes and sizes and protect your noggin from trauma. Helmets have Capacity 6 for being tricked out with accessories like trode nets and vision enhancements.

Ballistic shield: This large opaque shield is used by SWAT teams and in urban combat. It features a clear plastic window and a built-in ladder frame along the inside so that it can be used to climb over small obstacles.

Riot shield: As an added crowd control measure, a riot shield can be used to shock anyone who comes into contact with it, inflicting Electricity damage (p. 170). The taser shield holds 10 charges; when attached to a power point, it regains one charge per 10 seconds.

Wireless: The riot shield recharges by induction, recharging one charge per hour.

ELECTRONICS

For complete coverage of the Matrix attributes used by electronic equipment, see **Devices**, p. 219.

COMMLINKS

Commlinks are universal communication devices; they're used by everyone all the time. Commlinks are essentially the digital Swiss army knives of the modern world. Even the most basic of them includes AR Matrix browsing capability, multiple telephone and radio modes of real-time talk and text, music players, micro trid-projectors, touchscreen displays, built in high-resolution digital video and still image cameras, image/text and RFID tag scanners, built-in GPS guidance systems, chip players, credstick readers, retractable earbuds, voice-access dialing, text-to-speech and speech-to-text technologies, and a shock and water resistant case. And all of this at an inexpensive price that a few decades ago would have seemed absurd.

Sim Module: This commlink upgrade gives you the simsense experience, translating computer data into neural signals that allow you to directly experience simsense programs and augmented reality. A sim module must be accessed via a direct neural interface (trodes, datajack, or implanted commlink). Sim modules are a must-have for virtual reality of sorts, including VR clubs, VR games, simsense, and darker virtual pleasures. Sim modules can be modified for hot-sim, which opens up the full (and dangerous) range of VR experiences.

COMMLINKS

MODEL	DEVICE RATING	AVAIL	COST
Meta Link	1	2	100¥
Sony Emperor	2	4	700¥
Renraku Sensei	3	6	1,000¥
Erika Elite	4	8	2,500¥
Hermes Ikon	5	10	3,000¥
Transys Avalon	6	12	5,000¥
Fairlight Caliban	7	14	8,000¥
Sim module	—	—	+1 Mod
w/ hot-sim	—	+4F	+250¥

CYBERDECKS

DECK	DEVICE RATING	ATTRIBUTE ARRAY	PROGRAMS	AVAIL	COST
Erika MCD-1	1	4321	1	3R	49,500¥
Microdeck Summit	1	4331	1	3R	58,000¥
Microtrónica Azteca 200	2	5432	2	6R	110,250¥
Hermes Chariot	2	5442	2	6R	123,000¥
Novatech Navigator	3	6543	3	9R	205,750¥
Renraku Tsurugi	3	6553	3	9R	214,125¥
Sony CIY-720	4	7654	4	12R	345,000¥
Shiawase Cyber-5	5	8765	5	15R	549,375¥
Fairlight Excalibur	6	9876	6	18R	823,250¥

CYBERDECKS

If you were a decker and someone swung a monofilament claymore at you, you'd protect your cyberdeck with your body, and not the other way around. This isn't just because the things are fraggin' expensive—cyberdecks (or decks) are a decker's life's blood, an all-in-one ticket to hacking the planet. The most common form of a deck is a smooth, flat, elongated rectangle, slim with plenty of display space for touch controls, although they can take many forms. For more information about them, see **Cyberdecks**, p. 227.

All cyberdecks include illegal hot-sim modules right out of the box.

HERMES CYBERDECK

ELECTRONICS ACCESSORIES

Unless otherwise noted, these accessories are compatible with commlinks, cyberdecks, and (with the gamemaster's permission) other electronic devices.

AR gloves: Available in numerous styles, AR gloves allow you to manually interact with the Matrix in Augmented Reality mode, letting you "touch" and "hold" virtual AROs and receiving tactile force-feedback. AR Gloves can provide the exact weight, temperature, and hardness of touched or held objects, and more at the gamemaster's discretion.

Biometric reader: Sometimes someone online likes to know it's really you. This handheld device can be used for fingerprints, retina scans, voice patterns, tongue prints—pretty much anything but a DNA scan. You can use it to lock your electronics so only you (or one of your body parts) can unlock it.

Electronic paper: This electronic sheet is anywhere from post-it note to poster sized, and it can be folded or rolled up. It digitally displays images, text, data, or video and can act as a touchscreen. Electronic paper is wireless and can be written on or erased wirelessly. Sometimes hacker gangs cover the surfaces of buildings in electronic paper so they are constantly changing and overwritten with graffiti that can be seen even by people with their AR image-links turned off.

Printer: In case you need something in hardcopy (perhaps if Mr. Johnson hired you through a time portal), this full-color printer comes attached to a paper supply.

Satellite link: This allows the user to uplink to communication satellites in low-Earth orbit, connecting to the Matrix from places where no local wireless networks exist (which is rare but unfortunately extant). This link limits Noise due to distance to -5. Includes a portable satellite dish.

Simrig: This simsense recorder can record experience data (sensory and emotive) from you or whoever is wearing it. Simrig rigs are used to make most of the simsense chips sold on the market. You'll need to have a working sim module (with the DNI interface) to make a recording.

Subvocal microphone: The next best thing to telepathy is the ability to stage-whisper at any range. Attached with adhesive to your throat, this hard-to-spot microphone lets you communicate via subvocalized speech. A -4 dice pool modifier is applied to Perception Tests to overhear you when you're subvocalizing.

Trid projector: This device projects a trideo hologram into a five-meter cube right next to or above the device. The hologram can be quite realistic, but unless you're really artistic about it, it's pretty obvious that it's just trid.

Trodes: Available as a headband, net, or full-on cap, this electrode-and-ultrasound net gives you a direct neural interface. Useful if you're too squeamish to get a hole drilled in your head for a datajack. Adding this to headgear takes two slots of Capacity.

ACCESSORIES

ACCESSORY	DEVICE RATING	AVAIL	COST
AR Gloves	3	—	150¥
Biometric reader	3	4	200¥
Electronic paper	1	—	5¥
Printer	3	—	25¥
Satellite link	4	6	500¥
Simrig	3	12	1,000¥
Subvocal mic	3	4	50¥
Trid projector	3	—	200¥
Trodes	3	—	70¥

RFID TAGS

TAGS (PER 10)	DEVICE RATING	AVAIL	COST
Standard Tags	1	—	1¥
Datachip	1	—	1¥
Security Tags	3	3	5¥
Sensor Tags	2	5	10¥
Stealth Tags	3	7R	10¥

RFID TAGS

These tiny computers (named after old-fashioned radio frequency identification tags) form an integral part of every product commercially available in the Sixth World. Ranging in size from microscopic to slightly larger than a price tag, RFID tags have a stick-to-anything adhesive backing and can be tricky to spot. Tags are used for geo-tagging locations and objects, leaving a virtual AR message for anyone who comes by, employee tracking, access control, owner-contact information for everything from vehicles to pets, vehicle and weapon registration, and so on. They can also be used as tracking devices, periodically transmitting GPS data to the Matrix.

RFID tags are devices (p. 234) that can hold one or more files, but not much else. The physical location of a tag can be found via the Matrix (**Trace Icon**, p. 243). Tag data can be erased with a tag eraser (p. 441) or programmed with an Edit File action (p. 239). RFID tags have owners like all other devices, but unlike other devices a tag's owner can be changed to "nobody."

Datachip: For occasions when you want to transfer data by physical means—like bringing the project specs on the competition's new cyberdeck to Mr. Johnson in person at the meet—a datachip can hold enormous quantitites of data in a small finger-sized chip, accessible by any electronic device. Datachips have no wireless capability, so you need to plug them into a universal data connector (found on any device) if you want to read or write to them.

Security tags: Security-conscious megacorps often implant these security tags in their sararimen and valued citizens, either to monitor employee workplace productivity, grant and deny clearance and security access, or track employees in the case of abduction or extraction (or escape). These same tags are used on incarcerated and paroled criminals, and parents and schools also use them to track students. Security tags cannot be erased with a tag eraser due to EMP hardening. If a tag is implanted under the skin, an Extended Medicine + Logic [Mental] (10, 1 minute) Test is needed to remove it.

Sensor tags: A sensor RFID tag can be equipped with a single sensor (sold separately) of up to Rating 2 (**Sensors**, p. 445). It then records everything it can, to a maximum of 24 hours of time, at which point you can program it to either shut off or overwrite data older than 24 hours. Sensor tags are often used for diagnostic purposes in various devices, including cyberware.

Wireless: You can monitor the data in real time, if you're the tag's owner. The tag still records the last 24 hours for you.

Stealth tags: A stealth tag always runs silent (p. 235) and has a Sleaze rating equal to its Device Rating. It's disguised to not look like RFID tags, which gives it an additional -2 Concealability modifier. Stealth tags are often used as a backup for security tags by megacorps that are security conscious (and sneaky). They can be implanted the same way security tags can.

COMMUNICATIONS AND COUNTERMEASURES

Bug scanner: Also called a radio signal scanner, this device locates and locks in wireless devices within 20 meters. The scanner can also measure a signal's strength and pinpoint its location. To operate a bug scanner, roll Electronic Warfare + Logic [Rating]. A device that is running silent (like a Stealth tag) can use its Logic + Sleaze to defend against the scan. If you get any net hits at all, you find the device.

Wireless: You may substitute the scanner's Rating for your Electronic Warfare skill when you use it.

Data Tap: You use this hacking tool by attaching it to a data cable. Once it's clamped onto the cable, you can use it via universal data connector. Any device directly connected to the data tap also has a direct connection with the devices on either end of the cable (see **Direct Connections**, p. 232) and vice versa. The tap can be removed without damaging the cable.

Wireless: The data-tap can be wirelessly commanded to self-destruct as a Free Action, immediately and

instantly severing the direct connection. This does not harm the cable.

Headjammer: The headjammer is used by security personnel to neutralize implanted commlinks. When it's attached to your head (or other body part) and activated, it works in the same way as any other jammer, with its effects limited to you and your augmentations. Removing a headjammer from someone without the proper key requires a Hardware + Logic [Mental] or a Locksmith + Agility [Physical] (8, 1 Complex Action) Extended Test. Removing a Headjammer from yourself without the proper key is an Escape Artist + Agility [Physical] (4) Test, requiring a Complex Action.

Jammer: This device floods the airwaves with electromagnetic jamming signals to block out wireless and radio communication. The jammer generates noise equal to its Device Rating. The area jammer affects a spherical area—its rating is reduced by 1 for every 5 meters from the center (similar to the blast rules for grenades). The directional jammer affects a conical area with a 30-degree spread—its rating is reduced by 1 for every 20 meters from the center. The jammer only affects devices (and personas on those devices) that are within the jamming area, but it affects all of them. Walls and other obstacles may prevent the jamming signal from spreading or reduce its effect (gamemaster's discretion).

Wireless: You can set your jammer to not interfere with devices and personas you designate.

Micro-transceiver: This classic short-range communicator has been favored by professional operatives since the 2050s. It doesn't do anything special, it just lets you communicate by voice with other micro-transceivers and commlinks that you (and the other person) choose, within a kilometer. The micro-transceiver consists of an ear bud and an adhesive subvocal microphone (p. 439), both of which are commonly available in hard-to-spot designs.

Wireless: The micro-transceiver's range becomes worldwide.

Tag eraser: This handheld device creates a strong electromagnetic field perfect for burning out RFID tags and other unshielded electronics. It is probably strong enough to destroy a commlink, and you might want to keep it away from your cyberdeck just in case. When you bring the eraser within 5 millimeters of an electronic device and push the button, the device takes 10 boxes of Matrix damage (resisted normally). The extremely short range makes it hard to use on targets like vehicles, most drones, maglocks, and cyberware (and by the time you open them up to get at the electronics, you've already done plenty of damage). The tag eraser has one charge but can be fully recharged at a power point in 10 seconds.

Wireless: The tag eraser recharges fully in an hour by induction.

White noise generator: This device creates a field of random noise, masking the sounds within its area and preventing direct audio surveillance. All Perception Tests to overhear a conversation within (Rating) meters of a white noise generator receive a negative dice pool modifier equal to the generator's Rating. If more than one generator is in use, only count the highest rating. A white noise generator is redundant in a noisy environment (such as a nightclub or a firefight) and does not help to curtail video surveillance or jam wireless signals.

Wireless: The white noise generator's effective radius is tripled.

COMMUNICATIONS

DEVICE	AVAIL	COST
Bug scanner (Rating 1-6)	(Rating)R	Rating x 100¥
Data tap	6R	300¥
Headjammer (Rating 1-6)	(Rating)R	Rating x 150¥
Jammer, area (Rating 1-6)	(Rating x 3)F	Rating x 200¥
Jammer, directional (Rating 1-6)	(Rating x 2)F	Rating x 200¥
Micro-transceiver	2	100¥
Tag eraser	6R	450¥
White noise generator (Rating 1-6)	[illegible]	Rating x 50¥

SOFTWARE

Software can be purchased as an online download or less commonly on chip from physical stores. Datasofts, mapsofts, shopsofts, and tutorsofts can be easily stored and accessed on a commlink, dataterminal, or cyberdeck.

Agents and cyberprograms: These are used in cyberdecks and are explained in **Programs**, p. 243.

Autosofts: For information on these programs for drones, see p. 269.

Datasofts: Datasofts encompass a wide variety of information files, databases containing information on everything from hydraulic fracturing to 18th century romantic poetry. An appropriate datasoft gives you a +1 bonus to your Mental limit on related Knowledge Skill Tests.

Mapsoft: Mapsoft programs feature detailed information about a particular area, from streets to business/residential listings to topographical, census, GPS and environmental data. An interactive interface allows you to quickly determine the best routes and directions, locate the nearest spot of your choice, or create your own customized maps. If a wireless link is maintained, the map automatically self-updates with the latest data from GridGuide. Of course, this feature also means that the mapsoft can be used to track your location. At the gamemaster's discretion, mapsofts provide a +1 limit bonus to Navigation Tests made to navigate the area they cover.

Shopsofts: Shopping apps like Clothes Horse, Caveat Emptour, and Guns Near Me provide pricing breakdowns and user reviews for comparison shopping purposes, both for standard goods and black market purchases. Shopsofts self-update regularly to stay cur-

SOFTWARE

PROGRAM/SOFTWARE	AVAIL	COST
Agent (Rating 1–3)	Rating x 3	Rating x 1,000¥
Agent (Rating 4–6)	Rating x 3	Rating x 2,000¥
Autosoft	Rating x 2	Rating x 500¥
Cyberprogram, common use	—	80¥
Cyberprogram, hacking	6R	250¥
Datasoft	4	120¥
Mapsoft	4	100¥
Shopsoft	4	150¥
Tutorsoft (Rating 1–6)	Rating	Rating x 400¥

rent. An appropriate shopsoft—one exists for each type of product like electronics, firearms, melee weapons, armor, et cetera—provides a +1 bonus to your Social limit for all Availability and Negotiation tests you make to buy and sell those items.

Tutorsofts: These virtual private tutors aid you in learning a specific skill. The tutorsoft makes Instruction Tests with a dice pool equal to its Rating x 2. Tutorsofts cannot teach skills based on Magic or Resonance.

SKILLSOFTS

A skillsoft program is a recorded skill—digital knowledge and muscle memory. When used in conjunction with the proper augmentations (a skilljack for knowsofts and linguasofts, and a skillwire system for activesofts) skillsofts let you know and do things you've never otherwise learned. Even kung fu.

Skillsofts aren't educational tools; you can't actually learn from them. They're highly favored by corporations interested in a cheaper labor force (when the difference between a skilled and unskilled worker can be as simple as slotting a chip, the difference in salary is smaller).

When a skill test is called for, the character may use the skillsoft rating in place of the skill. Downside: tests made with a skillsoft may not be boosted with Edge in any way.

Activesofts: Activesofts replace physical active skills, basically every Active skill that isn't based on Magic or Resonance. A skillwire system (p. 455) is needed to translate the 'softs into usable muscle memory. There's a limit to the number of skills you can use at once, based on your skillwire's rating.

Knowsofts: Knowsofts replicate Knowledge skills, actively overwriting the user's knowledge with their own data. Knowsofts must be accessed with a skilljack, and the number you can use at once is limited by the skilljack.

Linguasofts: Linguasofts replicate language skills, allowing a user to speak a foreign language by automatically translating signals from the speech cortex, although chipped speech can be awkward and stilted—

SKILLSOFTS

SKILLSOFT	AVAIL	COST
Activesofts (Rating 1–6)	8	Rating x 5,000¥
Knowsofts (Rating 1–6)	4	Rating x 2,000¥
Linguasofts (Rating 1–6)	2	Rating x 1,000¥

then again, so can anyone speaking a language that's not their native tongue. Linguasofts must be accessed with a skilljack, which limits how many skillsofts you can use at a time.

ID AND CREDIT

IDs and credsticks are discussed in more detail under **Identification**, p. 366.

Certified credstick: Cash for the late 21st century. A certified credstick is not registered to any specific person—the electronic funds encoded on it belong to the holder, requiring no special ID or authorization to use. The bad news is that you can be physically mugged, any money you have on your credstick jacked and rolled. The good news is that certified credsticks are completely untraceable. They're not even wireless—you have to slot them into a universal data connector to transfer cash onto or off of them. This makes them enduringly popular with shadowrunners and the Mr. Johnsons who love to hire them.

Each type of credstick can only hold up to a certain amount of money, listed on the table. This is the maximum amount it can carry, not the amount it always has on it—so don't get excited when you see a gold credstick until you've slotted it and checked its balance.

Credit account: A credit account is an online banking account that can be accessed at any time via your commlink. Transactions require passcode or biometric verification to be authorized. The good news is no one can (physically) steal your bank account, and hacking credit accounts often requires a run to Zurich Orbital or something equally suicidal. The bad news is that digital transactions leave a "paper trail" that, while it can be hidden or concealed, is entirely too traceable for serious criminal activities. Each account must be registered to a particular (usually fake) SIN, unless the account is handled by an anonymous underworld banking service (with its own risks and complications). The cost of banking services is included in your lifestyle costs if you've got a Low Lifestyle or better—otherwise you'll need to keep all your money on credsticks.

Fake system identification number (SIN): In 2075, you're just a number. A SIN (or its international equivalents) is what makes a mere metahuman into a real person. Solid citizens receive their SINs at birth and carry them until they die. Not having a SIN means living outside the system, living with restricted or non-existent civil rights. Shadowrunners by default are SINless—they

CREDSTICKS

TYPE	MAX VALUE	AVAIL	COST
Standard	5,000¥	—	5¥
Silver	20,000¥	—	20¥
Gold	100,000¥	5	100¥
Platinum	500,000¥	10	500¥
Ebony	1,000,000¥	20	1,000¥

IDENTIFICATION

TYPE	AVAIL	COST
Fake SIN (Rating 1-6)	(Rating x 3)F	Rating x 2,500¥
Fake license (Rating 1-6)	(Rating x 3)F	Rating x 200¥

have a SIN only if they have the SINner quality (p. 84). Most runners don't have one, either because they were unfortunate enough to be born poor, or because they lost it or ditched it somewhere along the way. SINs are digital, not physical objects. They exist on your commlink, or in your PAN.

Getting by without a SIN can be a pain, so most runners settle for the next best thing: a fake. High quality fakes are difficult for The Man to spot; low quality fakes are ... less good. The rating of the fake SIN is used in tests against verification systems (**Fake SINs**, p. 367) .

Just like a real SIN, anytime you use a fake SIN for legitimate activity, you leave a datatrail in your wake. The fact that criminal activities can be tracked to fake SINs makes fake SINs inherently disposable. Most runners operate two or more fake SINs at a time, one for legal activity like paying rent and going shopping, another for shadier activity, and possibly a third to be used only when it's time to get the hell outta Dodge.

Fake license: For those who can't or won't go through the standard legal channels, fake licenses are available for all kinds of restricted items and activities. Items with no letter next to their availability don't require licenses. Items that are *Forbidden* have no license available. Licenses, therefore, are for *Restricted* items. Each type of item/activity permission requires a separate license. Things that require licenses include hunting (bow and rifle), possession of a firearm, concealed carry of a firearm (separate license), spellcasting, and any Restricted gear or augmentations, etc. Just as SINs essentially exist on your commlink, fake licenses exist on your SIN and are linked to it. When you buy a fake concealed-carry license, you don't buy it for Murderman the professional shadowrunner, you buy it for John Doe, one of Murderman's fake SINs. Each license must be assigned to a particular (fake) SIN of the player's choosing. Use the fake license's rating against verification systems (**Fake SIN**, p. 367).

TOOLS

Building and repairing items requires the right tools for the job. Tools must be bought separately for a specific skill (for example, an Armorer shop, a Disguise kit, a Nautical Mechanic facility, etc.). A **kit** is portable and contains the basic gear to make standard repairs. A **shop** is transportable in the back of a van and contains more advanced tools for building and repairing. A **facility** needs a building and is immobile because of the bulky and heavy machines involved, but it can be used for very advanced constructions and modifications. Shops and facilities are both stocked with standard spare parts.

TOOLS

TYPE	AVAIL	COST
Kit	—	500¥
Shop	8	5,000¥
Facility	12	50,000¥

There are some guidelines to help you figure out when a kit, shop, or facility is necessary for a particular job (**Building & Repairing**, p. 145). The gamemaster gets final say, though, and might even tell you that you need specific or unusual parts you have to get separately.

OPTICAL AND IMAGING DEVICES

From wiz shades to bulky goggles, basic vision enhancers are available in several forms. All such devices have—and by default use—wireless capability, although you can use a universal data cable for most of them. Each device has a Capacity that allows you to add vision enhancements. Some of these devices are worn, while others are external sensor devices or even attached to weapons.

Binoculars: Typically handheld, binoculars come with built-in vision magnification. Binoculars are available in optical (which can't take additional vision enhancements) and electronic versions (which can take vision enhancements).

Camera: A common visual device, cameras can capture still photos, video, and trideo, including sound. Cameras may also be upgraded with vision enhancements and audio enhancements. A micro version is available with a Capacity 1.

Contacts: The most recent display devices are worn directly on the eyes. They are nearly undetectable, but they offer a bit of space for enhancements. Contacts have to be wireless; they don't have room for a universal data connector.

Glasses: Glasses are lenses contained in lightweight frames worn on the bridge of the nose; numerous cosmetic styles are available, and vision-enhancement-equipped glasses are hard to distinguish from prescription glasses or sunglasses at a glance.

Goggles: Relatively large and bulky, goggles are strapped to the head, making them difficult to dislodge.

Goggles have the potential to install a wide array of vision enhancements.

Imaging Scopes: These are vision enhancers and display devices that are usually top-mounted on weapons (**Firearm Accessories**, p. 431).

Monocle: A monocle is worn on a headband or helmet with a flip-down arm, or (for the old-fashioned look) on a chain.

OPTICAL DEVICES

These devices use optical technology (glass bending or reflecting light), not electronics, to function. They have many uses, one of the most dramatic of which is that they enable a magician to obtain line of sight for spellcasting from cover, something that can't be accomplished with electronic devices. Spellcasting targeted through optics this way suffers a -3 dice pool modifier. Optical devices can't take vision enhancements.

Endoscope: This fiber-optic cable is at least 1 meter long, with the first 20 centimeters on either side made up of myomeric rope (p. 449) and an optical lens. It allows the user to look around corners, under door slits, or into narrow spaces. It is available in any number of lengths, although longer segments can be unwieldy.

Mage Sight Goggles: These heavy goggles are connected to a myomeric rope (p. 449) wrapped around a fiber-optic cable that ends in an optical lens. The rope is available in lengths of 10, 20, or 30 meters.

Periscope: An L-shaped tube with two mirrors, the periscope allows the user to look, shoot, or cast spells around corners.

OPTICAL & IMAGING DEVICES

DEVICE	AVAIL	COST
Binoculars (Capacity 1–3)	—	Capacity x 50¥
Binoculars, Optical	—	50¥
Camera (Capacity 1–6)	—	Capacity x 100¥
Micro-Camera (Capacity 1)	—	100¥
Contacts (Capacity 1–3)	6	Capacity x 200¥
Glasses (Capacity 1–4)	—	Capacity x 100¥
Goggles (Capacity 1–6)	—	Capacity x 50¥
Endoscope	—	250¥
Imaging Scopes (Capacity 3)	2	300¥
Periscope	3	50¥
Mage Sight Goggles	12R	3,000¥
Monocle (Capacity 1–4)	—	Rating x 120¥

VISION ENHANCEMENTS

A number of options are available for installation in visual sensors and imaging devices from contacts to cameras. Each enhancement has an associated Capacity cost.

Low-light vision: This accessory allows you to see normally in light levels as low as starlight. It doesn't help in total darkness, though.

Flare compensation: This protects you from blinding flashes of light as well as simple glare. It mitigates the vision modifiers for glare and reduces the penalty from flashing lights, like from a flash-pak.

Image link: A standard upgrade, this lets you display visual information (text, pictures, movies, the current time, etc.) in your field of vision. This is usually AROs, but you can display pretty much whatever you want on it. You and your team can use it to share tactical and situational info in real time. An image link is what you need to truly "see" AR and participate in the modern world.

Smartlink: This accessory works with a smartgun system to give you the full benefit of the system. The smartgun will tell you the range to various targets, as well as ammunition level (and type), heat buildup, mechanical stress and so on. Without a smartlink, a smartgun system just sends out data that isn't received by anyone and has no effect. A smartlink installed in a natural eye or in a pair of cybereyes is more effective than a smartlink installed in an external device; see **Smartgun System**, p. 433.

VISION ENHANCEMENTS

ENHANCEMENT	CAPACITY	AVAIL	COST
Low-light vision	[1]	+4	+500¥
Flare compensation	[1]	+4	+250¥
Image link	[1]	—	+25¥
Smartlink	[1]	+4R	+2,000¥
Thermographic vision	[1]	+6	+500¥
Vision enhancement	[Rating]	+Rating x 2	+(Rating x 500)¥
Vision magnification	[1]	+2	+250¥

Thermographic vision: This enhancement enables vision in the infrared spectrum, enabling you to see heat patterns. It's a very practical way to spot living beings in areas of total darkness, to check if a motor or machine has been running lately, and so on.

Vision enhancement: This sharpens a character's vision at all ranges, providing visual acuity closer to that of the average hawk than that of the average metahuman. It adds its Rating as a positive modifier to your limit on visual Perception Tests.

Wireless: Add the vision enhancement's rating as a dice pool modifier to your visual Perception Tests.

Vision magnification: This zoom function digitally magnifies vision by up to fifty times, allowing distant targets to be seen clearly. For rules on using vision magnification in ranged combat, see p. 177.

AUDIO DEVICES

There are several common types of audio devices. Each device has a Capacity that allows you to add audio enhancements.

Directional microphone: This lets you listen in on distant conversations. Solid objects or loud sounds along the line of eavesdropping interfere, of course. It's as if you're up to one hundred meters closer to whatever you're pointing the mic at.

Ear buds: These ergonomic ear plugs are hard to spot and harder still to differentiate from the standard kind that comes with every music player and commlink.

Headphones: A full headset with an adjustable headband strap, or attached to a headphone. Earbuds are harder to spot, but headphones pack more capacity.

Laser microphone: This sophisticated sensor bounces a laser beam against a solid object like a windowpane, reads the vibrations on the surface, and translates them into the sounds that are occurring on the other side of the surface. Maximum range is 100 meters. A laser microphone cannot fit the spatial recognizer audio enhancement.

Omni-directional microphone: A standard omni-directional audio pickup and recorder. Usually incorporated into, connected to, or wirelessly linked with a commlink or other recording device. Micro versions are available at Capacity 1 only and have a Maximum Range of only 5 meters.

AUDIO ENHANCEMENTS

Audio enhancements are commonly available as installable upgrades to any of the audio sensors listed above. Each will play audio input from AR or other sources. Each enhancement has an associated capacity cost.

Audio enhancement: Audio enhancement allows the user to hear a broader spectrum of audio frequencies, including high and low frequencies outside the normal metahuman audible spectrum. The user also experiences fine discrimination of nuances and can block out distracting background noise. Audio enhancement adds its Rating to your limit in audio Perception Tests.

Wireless: Add the audio enhancement's rating as a dice pool modifier to your audio Perception Tests.

Select sound filter: This lets you block out background noise and focus on specific sounds or patterns of sounds. It even includes speech, word, and sound pattern recognition. Each Rating point lets you select a single sound group (such as the footsteps of a patrolling guard or the rotors of a distant helicopter) and focus on it. You only actively listen to one group at a time, but you can record the others for later playback or set them to triggered monitoring (such as sounding an alert if a conversation brings up a certain topic, or if there's a variation in the breathing pattern of a guard dog).

AUDIO DEVICES

DEVICE	AVAIL	COST
Directional mic (Capacity 1-6)	4	Capacity x 50¥
Ear buds (Capacity 1-3)	—	Capacity x 50¥
Headphones (Capacity 1-6)	—	Capacity x 50¥
Laser mic (Capacity 1-6)	6R	Capacity x 100¥
Omni-directional mic (Capacity 1-6)	—	Capacity x 50¥

AUDIO ENHANCEMENTS

ENHANCEMENT	CAPACITY	AVAIL	COST
Audio enhancement (Rating 1-3)	[Rating]	+Rating x 2	+(Rating x 500)¥
Select sound filter (Rating 1-3)	[Rating]	+Rating x 3	+(Rating x 250)¥
Spatial recognizer	[2]	+4	+1,000¥

Spatial recognizer: This hearing accessory pinpoints the source of a sound. You get a +2 bonus on your limit in Perception Tests to find the source of a specific sound.

Wireless: You get a +2 dice pool modifier to your Perception Tests when looking for a sound's source.

SENSORS

Sensors are found almost everywhere. Cheaply produced by the billions, miniaturization and integration have made sensors both located everywhere and hard to spot. You can put sensors in just about everything, and lots of people do. Your can of FizzyGoo is watching you and reporting back to marketing. You can play the sensor game, too.

Sensors need to be placed in a housing or case of some sort, or built into another device. Sensors can record data themselves or forward it wirelessly in real-time or as files to other devices. Sensors are available in seven ratings (2–8) and two types: single and array. When you use the sensor array for Perception Tests, you may use your Electronic Warfare skill in place of your Perception skill, and you may use the sensor's Rating as your limit.

Sensor array: This sensor package includes up to eight functions listed under Sensor Functions.

Single sensor: This is a sensor that can do only one function listed under Sensor Functions.

HOUSINGS

Sensors can be put into devices that have capacity. Most vehicles and drones come factory-equipped with a sensor array (at a rating listed with their stats). What you can put your sensor in is limited by the Rating of the sensor (see Sensor Housings table).

SENSOR HOUSINGS

SENSOR PACKAGE	MAX SENSOR RATING
RFID, audio or visual device, headware	2
Handheld device, small (or smaller) drone	3
Wall-mounted Device, medium drone	4
Large drone, cyberlimb	5
Motorcycle	6
Vehicle (larger than a motorcycle)	7
Buildings, airports, etc.	8

SENSORS

DEVICE	CAPACITY	AVAIL	COST
Handheld Housing	1-3	—	Capacity x 100¥
Wall-Mounted Housing	1-6	—	Capacity x 250¥
Sensor Array (Rating 2-8)	[6]	7	Rating x 1,000¥
Single Sensor (Rating 2-8)	[1]	5	Rating x 100¥

SENSOR FUNCTION

FUNCTION	MAX RANGE
Atmosphere sensor	—
Camera	—
Cyberware scanner	15 meters
Directional microphone	—
Geiger counter	—
Laser microphone	100 meters
Laser range finder	1,000 meters
MAD scanner	5 meters
Motion sensor	25 meters
Olfactory sensor	—
Omni-directional microphone	—
Radio signal scanner	20 meters
Ultrasound	50 meters

SENSOR FUNCTIONS

All of the functions you can choose for your sensor(s) are listed on the Sensor Functions table. If a function has the same name as an imaging or audio device, it's the same as its description in those sections, with a Capacity equal to its Rating, and thus is not described here.

Atmosphere sensor: Weather forecasts are notoriously untrustworthy (thanks to pollution, the Awakening, and other factors), but atmospheric sensors can keep you from getting caught in the rain with up-to-the second analysis of what's happening in the air around you.

Cyberware scanner: This millimeter-wave scanner is primarily intended to detect cyber-implants but can be used to identify other contraband as well. Maximum range 15 meters.

Geiger counter: This sensor picks up the amount of radioactivity surrounding it.

Laser range finder: This simple sensor emits a laser beam that is reflected off a target's surface and picked up by a detector to calculate the exact distance to the target.

MAD scanner: The MAD (Magnetic Anomaly Detection) scanner is used to detect weapons and concentrations of metal. It has a maximum range of 5 meters.

Motion sensor: This sensor uses a mix of ultrasound and low-power infrared to detect motion and drastic changes in the ambient temperature. Maximum range is 25 meters.

Olfactory scanner: The olfactory sensor picks up and analyzes the molecules in the air. It works in the same way as the olfactory booster cyberware.

Radio signal scanner: This can be used as a bug scanner (p. 440).

Ultrasound: The ultrasound accessory consists of an emitter that sends out continuous ultrasonic pulses and a receiver that picks up the echoes of these pulses to create a topographic ultrasound map. Ultrasound is perfect to "see" textures, calculate distances between objects, and pick up things otherwise invisible to the naked eye (like people cloaked by an Invisibility spell), it can't handle colors or brightness. It also can't penetrate materials like glass that would be transparent to optical sensors. You can set it to a passive mode, where it doesn't emit ultrasonic pulses but still picks up ultrasound from outside sources, such as motion sensors or someone else's ultrasound sensors on active mode (or bats).

Vision magnification: This zoom function digitally magnifies vision by up to 50 times, allowing distant targets to be seen clearly assuming a clear line of sight. For rules on using vision magnification in ranged combat, see p. 178.

SECURITY DEVICES

For more details on how security devices are used, see p. 362.

Key lock: Even in the wireless world, there are still some mechanical key locks and combination locks around. Some of them are old infrastructure that is still in place to save money, others for nostalgia, still others because modern burglars don't expect them. For more details, see p. 363.

SECURITY AND RESTRAINTS

SECURITY DEVICE	AVAIL	COST
Key/combination lock (Rating 1-6)	Rating	Rating x 10¥
Maglock	Rating	Rating x 100¥
Keypad or card reader	—	+50¥
Anti-tamper circuits (Rating 1-4)	+Rating	+(Rating x 250)¥
Biometric reader	+4	+200¥
RESTRAINT	**AVAIL**	**COST**
Metal	—	20¥
Plasteel	6R	50¥
Plastic (per 10)	—	5¥
Containment manacles	6R	250¥

Maglock: Maglocks are electronic locks with a variety of access control options, from biometrics, to keycards, to passcards. For more information about maglocks and their options, see **Maglocks**, p. 363.

Restraints: Standard metal restraints (Armor 16, Structure 2) come with a mechanical or a wireless-controlled lock (**Barriers**, p. 197). Modern plasteel restraints (Armor 20, Structure 2) are flash-fused and remain in place until the subject is cut free. Disposable plastic straps (Armor 6, Structure 1) are lightweight and easy to carry in bundles. Containment manacles are metal (Armor 16, Structure 2) and attached to a prisoner's wrists or ankles to prevent her from moving faster than a shuffle or extending a cyber-implant weapon.

BREAKING AND ENTERING GEAR

Rules for typical security devices and how to break them can be found on p. 362. Most of the gear you'd expect to find here but isn't can be covered with the appropriate tools (p. 443).

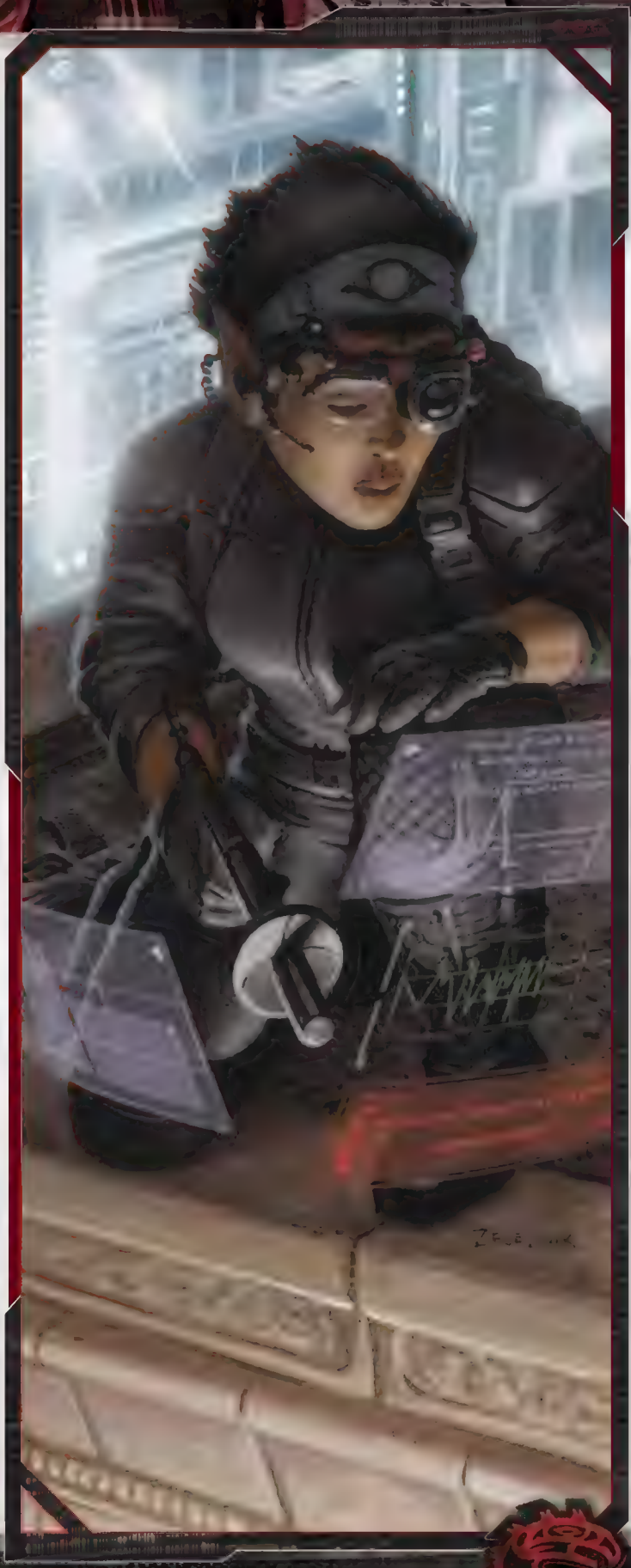
Autopicker: This lockpick gun is a quick and effective way of bypassing mechanical locks. The autopicker's rating is added to your limit when picking a mechanical lock.

Wireless: Having access to a huge online database of mechanical locks lets you add the autopicker's rating as a dice pool modifier to your test when picking a mechanical lock.

Cellular glove molder: This device will take a finger or palm print and mold a "sleeve" you can wear to mimic the print to fool some biometric locks (**Maglocks**, p. 363).

Chisel/crowbar: The chisel (or crowbar if you prefer) doubles your effective Strength when you're forcing a door or container.

Keycard copier: The keycard copier allows the user to copy a (stolen) keycard in seconds. A new keycard can then be manufactured with a Hardware kit, about ten minutes, and a Hardware + Logic [Mental] (2) Test.



B&E GEAR

GEAR	AVAIL	COST
Autopicker (Rating 1-6)	8R	Rating x 500¥
Cellular glove molder (Rating 1-4)	12F	Rating x 500¥
Chisel/crowbar	—	20¥
Keycard copier (Rating 1-6)	8F	Rating x 600¥
Lockpick set	4R	250¥
Maglock passkey (Rating 1-4)	(Rating x 3)F	Rating x 2,000¥
Miniwelder	2	250¥
Miniwelder fuel canister	2	80¥
Monofilament chainsaw	8	500¥
Sequencer (Rating 1-6)	(Rating x 3)F	Rating x 250¥

EXOTIC MELEE WEAPON	ACC	REACH	DAMAGE	AP
Monofilament chainsaw	3	1	8P	–6

When used, the forged keycard uses its Rating x 2 in an Opposed Test against the Maglock Rating x 2 (**Maglocks**, p. 363). Some security systems may note the unusual usage of duplicate keys, like when "Dr. Scientist" accesses a lab that she just accessed and hasn't left yet.

Lockpick set: These mechanical burglary devices have undergone only slight improvements in the last several centuries. They are necessary tools for picking locks.

Maglock passkey: This maglock "skeleton key" can be inserted into any cardreader's maglock, cleverly fooling it into believing that a legitimate passkey has been swiped. See **Maglocks**, p. 363.

Wireless: The passkey receives a +1 bonus to its Rating.

Miniwelder: This portable device creates a small electric arc to melt metals, either to cut through metal or to weld it together. Its power supply allows it to operate for 30 minutes. While creating an intense heat, the arc is much too small to make a good weapon (it would be like trying to stab someone with a lighter). The miniwelder has a Damage Value of 25 when used to cut through barriers.

Monofilament chainsaw: The top of each chain segment on this portable motorized saw is covered with monofilament wire. Ideal for cutting through trees, doors, and other immovable objects. A monofilament chainsaw is too unwieldy to make a good melee weapon (use Exotic Melee Weapon skill). When used against barriers, double the monofilament chainsaw's Damage Value of 8P.

Sequencer: An electronic device requried to defeat keypad-maglocks. See **Maglocks**, p. 363.

Wireless: The sequencer receives a +1 bonus to its Rating.

INDUSTRIAL CHEMICALS

If you're looking for toxins and drugs, you should go to p. 408.

Glue solvent: This spray can has enough solvent to dissolve about a square meter of fast-drying aerosol superglue.

Glue sprayer: This fast-drying aerosol superglue allows you to quickly glue two rigid surfaces together, and holds enough for about a square meter of glue (enough to glue an exterior door or picture window shut). The glue takes 1 Combat Turn to harden. The glue has Body and Strength Ratings of 5 for the purpose of trying to force it (an Opposed Body + Strength Test).

Thermite burning bar: Thermite gel is an incendiary material that burns at extremely high temperatures. It is applied with the help of a burning bar—a rod of thermite and oxygen mounted on a handle and in a frame—that can be used to melt holes in iron, steel, and even plasteel. The thermite burning bar inflicts Fire Damage with a DV of 30P. It has to be set carefully, so a thermite bar can't be used as a weapon (unless your target is tied up or unconscious or something, in which case, wow, ouch).

Wireless: The burning bar can be activated wirelessly.

INDUSTRIAL CHEMICALS

CHEMICALS	AVAIL	COST
Glue solvent	2	90¥
Glue sprayer	2	150¥
Thermite burning bar	16R	500¥

SURVIVAL GEAR

Common survival gear includes the following:

Chemsuit: This impermeable coverall is worn over clothes or armor and provides chemical protection equal to its Rating (**Chemical Protection**, p. 437). It is not to be confused with a full hazmat suit, as it is not vacuum sealed. If a chemsuit is worn on top of chemical-resistant armor, only the highest chemical protection rating applies.

Climbing gear: This is a backpack full of rope (400-kilo test), an ascent/descent harness, gloves, carabiners, crampons, and so forth needed for assisted climbing (**Climbing**, p. 134).

Diving gear: Underwater diving equipment, including a diving suit, partial facemask with snorkel, breathing regulator, an air tank with 2 hours of air, and an inflatable vest for quick returns to the surface. The regulator and air tank protect against inhalation toxins just like a gas mask. The wet suit provides Rating 1 resistance to Cold damage (p. 170). Wireless signals don't work very well underwater, but the wireless systems in the diving gear help with prep and maintenance.

Flashlight: By 2075, most flashlights are long lasting and super bright. Durability and brightness depend on the size—the bulkier, the better. Flashlights are also available in low-light and infrared versions, reducing visibility modifiers for low-light and thermographic vision, respectively. A flashlight can also be mounted to a weapon's top or under-barrel mount (**Mounts**, p. 417).

Gas mask: This air-supplied re-breather completely covers your face and gives you immunity to inhalation-vector toxin attacks (**Toxins, Drugs, and BTLs**, p. 408). It comes with a one-hour clean-air supply (replacements cost 40 nuyen) and can be attached to larger air tanks. It cannot be combined with a regular respirator.

Wireless: The gas mask analyzes and gives you information about the surrounding air that you're *not* breathing.

Gecko tape gloves: The outer layer of these gloves is made of a special dry adhesive that incorporates millions of fine microscopic hairs that bond to other surfaces. Individually, these bonding forces are tiny, but combined they're strong enough to attach a troll, upside down, to the ceiling. Gecko tape gloves come as a set that includes gloves, kneepads, and slip-on-soles. You get to use assisted climbing (p. 134) when you're wearing the set. Gecko tape gloves are useless when they're wet.

Wireless: The adhesive outer layer can be temporarily neutralized with a wireless signal, useful for getting the gloves on and off without getting them stuck to yourself or each other.

Hazmat suit: The hazmat suit covers your whole body and includes an internal air tank with four hours of air. As long as it's not damaged, it provides you with a chemical seal (p. 437) and protects you from contact and inhalation vector toxin attacks (**Toxins, Drugs, and BTLs**, p. 408). Many hazmat suits come standard with a Geiger counter (**Sensors**, p. 445).

Wireless: The suit analyzes and transmits information about the environment that you're *not* touching or breathing.

Light stick: Bend, snap, and shake it to produce three hours of soft chemical illumination that covers a ten-meter radius.

Magnesium torch: Strike and activate for five minutes of bright torchlight.

Micro flare launcher: The flare launcher can shoot colored flares about 200 meters into the air, illuminating an area the size of a city block for a couple of minutes and negating the modifier for poor or low lighting. If you shoot it at someone, use the Exotic Ranged Weapon skill; the micro flare deals 5P Fire damage.

Rappelling gloves: These gloves are made of a special fabric that allows you to get a tighter grip on a grapple line, giving you a +2 dice pool bonus on all tests to hold your grip on the line. These gloves are necessary in order to use ultrathin microwire without gruesomely slicing your hands apart as you slide down it.

Respirator: A respirator is a filter-mask worn over the mouth and nose that protects against inhalation-vector toxins (**Toxins, Drugs, and BTLs**, p. 408). The respirator adds its rating to toxin resistance tests against inhalation-vector toxins.

Survival kit: An assortment of survival gear in a rugged bag. Includes a knife, lighter, matches, compass, lightweight thermal blanket, several days' worth of ration bars, a water-purification unit, and more. A good item to consider for your go-bag.

SURVIVAL GEAR

GEAR	AVAIL	COST
Chemsuit (Rating 1-6)	Rating x 2	Rating x 150¥
Climbing gear	—	200¥
Diving gear	6	2,000¥
Flashlight	—	25¥
Gas mask	—	200¥
Gecko tape gloves	12	250¥
Hazmat suit	8	3,000¥
Light stick	—	25¥
Magnesium torch	—	5¥
Micro flare launcher	—	175¥
Micro flares	—	25¥
Rappelling gloves	—	50¥
Respirator (Rating 1-6)	—	Rating x 50¥
Survival Kit	4	200¥

GRAPPLE GUN

This gun can shoot a grappling hook and attached rope, using Light Crossbow ranges. It comes equipped with an internal winch to pull back the grapple (or pull up small loads). Use the Exotic Ranged Weapon skill to shoot it. Micro rope can support a weight of up to 100 kilograms; standard and stealth ropes can support a weight of up to 400 kilograms.

Microwire: This micro rope is made of an extremely thin (nearly monofilament) and resilient fiber; a great length of it can be stored in a very small compartment, and it is very difficult to see. The downside is that it can only be grabbed with special protective rappelling gloves without slicing straight through the climber's hands, inflicting 8P damage with an AP of -8.

Myomeric rope: Made of a special myomeric fiber, this rope's movement can be controlled remotely (over a maximum length of thirty meters). For example, the controller can wind it like a snake to reach around an obstacle or tie to a ledge. The rope moves at a rate of two meters per Combat Turn.

Stealth rope & catalyst stick: When stealth rope is touched with the catalyst stick, the chemical reaction that is triggered crumbles the rope to dust within seconds, leaving almost no trace. The catalyst stick is reusable.

GRAPPLE GUN

GEAR	AVAIL	COST
Grapple gun	8R	500¥
Catalyst stick	F	120¥
Microwire	4	50¥ per 100 m
Myomeric rope	10	200¥ per 10 m
Standard rope	—	50¥ per 100 m
Stealth rope	F	85¥ per 100 m

EXOTIC RANGED WEAPON	ACC	DAMAGE	AP	MODE	AMMO
Micro flare launcher	3	5P (Fire)	–5	SS	1 (ml)
Grapple gun	3	7S	–2	SS	1 (ml)

BIOTECH

DEVICE	AVAIL	COST
Biomonitor	3	300¥
Disposable syringe	3	10¥
Medkit (Rating 1-6)	Rating	Rating x 250¥
Medkit supplies	—	100¥

DOCWAGON CONTRACT

CONTRACT	AVAIL	COST
Basic	—	5,000¥ per year
Gold	—	25,000¥ per year
Platinum	—	50,000¥ per year
Super-platinum	—	100,000¥ per year

BIOTECH

Healing rules are on p. 205.

Biomonitor: This compact device measures life signs—heart rate, blood pressure, temperature, and so on. The biomonitor can also analyze blood, sweat, and skin samples. Used by medical services and patients who need to monitor their own health, biomonitors can be worn as an armband or wristband or integrated into clothing or commlinks.

Wireless: The biomonitor shares information with other wireless devices you designate and can auto-alert DocWagon or another ambulance service if your life signs reach certain thresholds.

Disposable syringe: Made of plastic with a metal needle, syringes are intended for a single use. Syringes can be used to apply injection-vector toxins. An uncooperative victim might need to be immobilized or at least grappled first.

Medkit: The medkit includes drug supplies, bandages, tools, and a (talkative) doctor expert system that can advise the user on techniques to handle most typical medical emergencies (including fractures, gunshot wounds, chemical wounds, and poisoning, as well as offering advice for the treating of shock, handling blood loss, and of course performing resuscitations). Add the medkit's rating to your limit on First Aid tests. A medkit of Rating 3 or lower fits in a pocket; at Rating 4+ it's a handheld case. The medkit needs to be restocked after every (Rating) uses.

Wireless: The Medkit provides a dice pool bonus equal to its rating to First Aid + Logic tests, or can operate itself with a dice pool of Medkit Rating x 2 and a limit equal to its Rating.

DOCWAGON CONTRACT

Don't leave home without it! DocWagon offers first-class emergency medical care on a twenty-four-hour basis, and they come to you! Four contract service levels are available: basic, gold, platinum, and super-platinum. A DocWagon contract requires the filing of tissue samples (held in a secure vault staffed by bonded guards, spiders, and mages) and comes with a biomonitor RFID tag implant or wristband that can be activated to call for help and then to serve as a homing beacon for DocWagon armed ambulances and fast-response choppers in the area. Rupture of the band will also alert DocWagon representatives.

Upon receiving a call from a contract-holder, DocWagon franchises guarantee arrival of an armed trauma team in less than ten minutes, or else the emergency medical care is free. Resuscitation service carries a high premium (5,000 nuyen), as does High Threat Response (HTR) service (5,000 nuyen). In the latter case, the client or their next of kin is expected to pay medical bills up to and including death compensation for DocWagon employees (20,000 nuyen per cold body).

Gold service includes one free resuscitation per year, a fifty percent reduction on HTR service charges, and a ten percent discount on extended care. Platinum service includes four free resuscitations per year and a fifty percent discount on extended care. There is no charge for HTR services, but employee death compensation still applies. *Super-platinum* subscribers are entitled to five free resuscitations a year and do not have to pay for HTR services or death compensation.

Doc Wagon does not respond to calls on extraterritorial government or corporate property without permission from the controlling authority.

SLAP PATCHES

Slap patches are adhesive dermal drug dispensers that allow continual, safe administration of necessary

chemicals. They are applied directly to the patient's skin. Applying a slap patch to an unwilling patient requires a successful melee attack (which deals no damage), which may be tricky if your target doesn't have much exposed skin (**Called Shots**, p. 195).

Antidote patch: Add the rating of an antidote patch to any toxin resistance tests made within twenty minutes after it has been applied. The window to apply an antidote patch after being poisoned is often very narrow, depending on the toxin (**Toxins, Drugs, and BTLs**, p. 408).

Chem patch: This is a "blank" patch. You can add one dose of a chemical or toxin (p. 408) to it, and then apply it later to a patient (or yourself).

Stim patch: This patch removes a number of boxes of Stun damage equal to its Rating. This effect lasts for (Rating x 10) minutes—after that period of time, the patient takes (Rating + 1) unresisted Stun damage (which may be well become physical overflow by that point). While a stimulant patch is in effect, the character is unable to rest. Frequent use of stimulant patches may require Addiction Tests. Treat it as Addiction Rating 2, Addiction Threshold 1.

Tranq patch: This patch inflicts Stun damage equal to its rating, resisted with only Body.

Trauma patch: If placed on a dying patient, it allows her to make an immediate stabilization test (**Physical Damage Overflow**, p. 209) using her Body instead of First Aid or Medicine.

Wireless: Instead of making a test, the patient is automatically stabilized immediately.

SLAP PATCHES

PATCH	AVAIL	COST
Antidote patch (Rating 1-6)	Rating	Rating x 50¥
Chem patch	6	200¥
Stim patch (Rating 1-6)	Rating x 2	Rating x 25¥
Tranq patch (Rating 1-10)	Rating x 2	Rating x 20¥
Trauma patch	6	500¥

AUGMENTATION

Cyberware and bioware augmentations are everywhere in 2075. For the rich, the poor, and everyone in between, bodyshops on every street corner offer minor modifications at your convenience, legally and otherwise. Even the gang-bangers on those street corners might be equipped with cybernetic vision, hearing enhancements, or datajacks.

Besides their wireless functionality, almost all cyberware devices are equipped with a neural interface (not to be confused with DNI) that lets you mentally activate and control their functions. You can use this in place of wireless control, preventing wireless hacking, as long as all of the "moving parts" are connected to your nervous system. An item that has a wireless bonus, however, can only gain that full level of functionality if wireless functionality is active.

CYBERWARE AND BIOWARE GRADES

Cyberware and bioware implants are available in five distinct grades: standard, alphaware, betaware, deltaware, and used. Only standard, alphaware, and used implants are available for purchase at character creation. The prices for cyberware and bioware presented in this chapter are for standard 'ware. When purchasing implants of other grades, apply the Essence Cost, Cost, and Availability adjustments as noted on the Implant Grades table.

All accessories and add-ons must be of the same grade as the implant to which they are added.

'WARE GRADES

GRADES	ESS COST MULTIPLIER	AVAIL MODIFIER	COST MULTIPLIER
Standard	x 1.0	—	x 1
Alphaware	x 0.8	+2	x 1.2
Betaware	x 0.7	+4	x 1.5
Deltaware	x 0.5	+8	x 2.5
Used	x 1.25	–4	x 0.75

CYBERSURGERY AND RECOVERY TIME

Getting cyberware and bioware installed hurts. When you have an augmentation implanted (after character creation), your Physical and Stun Condition Monitors each take a number of boxes of damage equal to the item's Essence Cost x 3 (but never into overflow). Most cyberclinics and body shops offer recovery rooms for patients to rest and heal up after cybersurgery, but beware the sterility and cleanliness of the less-reputable chop shops.

HEADWARE

These small complex devices are inserted into the head and typically constructed via less-invasive nanosurgery. Items that have a Capacity Cost [in brackets] may be installed in cyberlimbs instead, costing Capacity rather than Essence.

Commlink: The implanted version of the commlink (p. 438) comes with a sim module at no additional cost. An integral headware commlink is popular with corporate operatives, company men, and sararimen on the go. Generally speaking, commlinks with a Device Rat-

ing of less than 5 are not installed inside your skull, for security reasons.

Control rig: This implant harnesses the raw data-coordinating and synchronization power of the middle brain for the express purpose of directly manipulating rigged vehicles and drones (and other devices with rigger interface, like turrets). It has a built-in sim module, so you can use it for DNI with other devices. It also comes with a universal data connector and about a meter of retractable cable (it's like getting a free datajack). When you're jumped into a vehicle or drone, the control rig provides its Rating as a dice pool bonus on all Vehicle skill tests. Additionally, the rating of your control rig is added to the Handling and Speed of any vehicle you are jumped into. As if that was not enough, your Vehicle Test thresholds are reduced by the rating of your control rig (to a minimum of 1), again when you're jumped in.

Cortex bomb: An illegal method of coercion, cranial bombs come in three flavors: kink, microbomb, and area bomb. Kink bombs are designed to damage only part of the victim's head, either rendering specific headware useless or damaging the brain to cause blindness, stuttering, hearing loss, or some other trauma. Of course, sometimes when *something in your head explodes*, things don't go exactly as planned and the result is a bit ... much. The microbomb version is just powerful enough to kill the unfortunate bearer. Area cranial bombs kill the victim, and they also affect a blast area exactly like a fragmentation grenade (p. 434). The bombs can be remote- or time-detonated, or even set to discharge by sound recognition. If installed in cyberlimbs, these bombs are designed to destroy specific components (kink), the entire limb (regular), or blast the area and damage the bearer (microbomb).

Cyberdeck: Simply put, you've got a deck in your body. This is a very convenient for ther hacker on the go and is often sported by G-men and military deckers.

Datajack: A datajack gives you a direct neural interface (p. 222), which can be handy in a lot of situations. It also comes with a retractable spool of micro-cable (about a meter long) that lets you directly interface with any electronic device via a universal access cable. Datajacks are equipped with their own cache of storage memory for downloading or saving files. Two datajack users can string a fiberoptic cable between themselves to conduct a private mental communication immune to radio interception or eavesdropping.

Wireless: The datajack gives you Rating 1 noise reduction.

Data Lock: This special datajack is popular with couriers, spies, diplomatic aids, and executive liasions. Effectively, it turns the character in whom it is installed into a walking data safe. The data lock has a Device Rating equal to its own rating, and it protects the data from anyone not authorized to access it (possibly including you). Data locks are not wireless enabled; they can only be accessed via universal data connector. In fact the bearer of the implant doesn't have mental access to the data—they're only a carrier.

Olfactory Booster: This cybersnout enhances, identifies, and records smells, and can play them back later. The massively enhanced olfactory capabilities of a sniffer open up a whole new world of sensory data to you—you'll be able to sense things that ordinarily only a scenthound would. You can smell people's emotions in their sweat (and if applicable, the maker's mark of their tailored pheromones), traces of ammunition propellant, explosives, or biological and chemical warfare compounds—the list goes on and on. A cut-off function allows you to completely ignore intense odors, possibly the most convenient feature for use in your daily life. The olfactory booster can even be used in VR to create an even more immersive experience. Add the booster's rating as a dice pool modifier to your scent-based Perception Tests.

Simrig: An implanted version of the simrig described on p. 439, this headware implant allows you to record sensory data for later replay (or sale if you're really interesting).

Skilljack: This headware interprets knowsofts and linguasofts for your brain so you can use them as though they were your own. It can also run activesofts, but they only act as Knowledge Skills unless you have skillwires (p. 455). The total of all skills running on a skilljack cannot exceed its Rating x 2, and the maximum Rating for a skill is the skilljack's Rating. Starting skills from storage and stopping skills is a Free Action. You can't use Edge with skills you have through a skilljack. If you have more than one skilljack, only one of them can operate at a time.

Wireless: The extra boost from the Matrix increases the total Rating limit to the skilljack's Rating x 3.

Taste Booster: The taste booster performs the same function as the olfactory booster, except that it enhances your taste buds. The taste booster also lets you experience gustatory data in AR and VR environments with a "taste track"—*caveat emptor* on that one, chummer. Apply the taste booster's rating as a dice pool bonus to any Perception Test involving taste.

Tooth Compartment: The oldest cyberware on the market, these hollow teeth come in storage and breakable models. The storage model is used to smuggle really, really tiny contraband, the size of a datachip or a really small RFID tag. Items can be removed with a wireless signal or hidden catch. The breakable model triggers a linked effect (such as starting a tracking signal, or releasing deadly poison into your mouth—make sure you remember which is which!) with a wireless signal, or it may trigger when you bite down hard on the tooth.

Ultrasound Sensor: This cyberware is exactly like the ultrasound sensor. When active, it replaces your normal vision. It can be switched between active sonar, passive sonar, and off with a Free Action.

Voice Modulator: This implant gives you perfect pitch and enormous vocal flexibility and distortion capabilities. You can speak with an increased volume (up to 100 decibels) without strain, shift your pitch to make perfect bird calls or mellifluous singing, and most importantly, uncanny vocal impressions. The modulator can also play back (and more or less perfectly imitate) a recorded or captured voice. Add the Rating of the modulator to your dice pool for Impersonation skill tests.

HEADWARE

DEVICE	ESSENCE	CAPACITY	AVAIL	COST
Commlink	0.2	[2]	—	2,000¥ + Commlink Cost
Control Rig				
Rating 1	1	—	5R	43,000¥
Rating 2	2	—	10R	97,000¥
Rating 3	3	—	15R	208,000¥
Cortex Bomb				
Kink	0	[1]	12F	10,000¥
Microbomb	0	[2]	18F	25,000¥
Area Bomb	0	[3]	20F	40,000¥
Cyberdeck	0.4	[4]	3R	5,000¥ + deck cost
Datajack	0.1	—	2	1,000¥
Data Lock (Rating 1–12)	0.1	—	Rating x 2	Rating x 1,000¥
Olfactory Booster (1–6)	0.2	—	Rating x 3	Rating x 4,000¥
Simrig	0.2	—	12R	4,000¥
Skilljack (Rating 1–6)	Rating x 0.1	—	Rating x 2	Rating x 20,000¥
Taste Booster	0.2	—	Rating x 3	Rating x 3,000¥
Tooth Compartment	—	—	8	800¥
Ultrasound Sensor (Rating 1–6)	0.25	[2]	10	Rating x 12,000¥
Voice Modulator (Rating 1–6)	0.2	—	Rating x 3F	Rating x 5,000¥

EYEWARE

Probably the most common piece of cyberware available in 2075 is cybereyes. Originally designed to gift the blind with normal sight, cybereyes allow for far more than normal human vision. While they still carry a social stigma in places, and the idea continues to carry a degree of squeamishness about it, it's not entirely uncommon for people with perfectly good natural eyes to trade them out for cybernetic replacements. Cybereyes are available in any shape or color, from "almost natural" to all chrome to solid glowing purple and everything in between. Some models have their color and pattern easily altered by downloading a new skin.

Most cybereye modifications are also offered as retinal modifications to the natural eye. Vision enhancements either take up Capacity in cybereyes or Essence in natural eyes, not both. As a general rule, upgrades are applied to both eyes so that the user's vision doesn't become unbalanced.

Cybereyes: The basic cybereyes system features 20/20 vision for both eyes, an image link, and a built-in camera at no extra cost, as well as capacity for vision enhancements.

Flare compensation: An implanted version of the flare compensation enhancement (p. 444).

Image link: An implanted version of the image link enhancement (p. 444).

Low-light vision: An implanted version of the low-light vision enhancement (p. 444).

Ocular drone: This enhancement only affects one eyeball per purchase. A small spyball drone is placed in your ocular cavity. The spyball functions as a normal cybereye (with all the relevant enhancements) until you remove it and control it as though it were a Horizon Flying Eye (p. 465). When it's out and you have only one eye, you suffer a -3 dice pool penalty to all tasks. If you replace both eyes with drones, you're effectively blind while those drones are operating apart from you. An ocular drone is obviously not available as a retinal modification.

Retinal duplication: This highly illegal modification can be loaded with a recording of someone else's retina to create an almost perfect reproduction. Make an Opposed Test between the retinal duplication Rating and the retinal scanner Rating (**Security Devices**, p. 362).

Smartlink: An implanted version of the smartlink vision enhancement (p. 444). Note that a smartlink installed in a natural eye or in a pair of cybereyes is more effective than a smartlink installed in an external device: see **Smartgun System**, p. 444.

Thermographic vision: An implanted version of the thermographic vision enhancement (p. 444).

Vision enhancement: An implanted version of vision enhancement (p. 444).

Vision magnification: An implanted version of the vision magnification enhancement (p. 444).

EARWARE

Earware, like eyeware, is available either with complete cybernetic replacements (with the modifications costing Capacity) or as a direct modification to the inner ear, costing essence. As a rule, upgrades are installed in both ears to prevent an imbalance of hearing.

Cyberears: Ordinarily, cyberears replace only the inner ear, although the whole thing can be replaced as well if you like. Cyberears offer hearing with normal ranges (like an omni-directional microphone), a sound link, and Capacity for modifications and enhancements.

Audio enhancement: An implanted version of audio enhancement (p. 445).

Balance augmenter: The balance augmenter enhances the inner ear's natural balance mechanism. You

EYEWARE

DEVICE	ESSENCE	CAPACITY	AVAIL	COST
Cybereyes basic system				
Rating 1	0.2	4	3	4,000¥
Rating 2	0.3	8	6	6,000¥
Rating 3	0.4	12	9	10,000¥
Rating 4	0.5	16	12	14,000¥
Flare compensation	0.1	[1]	4	1,000¥
Image link	0.1	*	4	1,000¥
Low-light vision	0.1	[2]	4	1,500¥
Ocular drone	—	[6]	6	6,000¥
Retinal duplication (Rating 1–6)	0.1	[1]	8F	Rating x 20,000¥
Smartlink	0.2	[3]	8R	4,000¥
Thermographic vision	0.1	[2]	4	1,500¥
Vision enhancement (Rating 1–3)	0.1	[Rating]	Rating x 3	Rating x 4,000¥
Vision magnification	0.1	[2]	4	2,000¥

** Included in the basic cybereyes system.*

EARWARE

DEVICE	ESSENCE	CAPACITY	AVAIL	COST
Cyberears				
Rating 1	0.2	4	3	3,000¥
Rating 2	0.3	8	6	4,500¥
Rating 3	0.4	12	9	7,500¥
Rating 4	0.5	16	12	11,000¥
Audio Enhancement (Rating 1-3)	0.1	[Rating]	Rating x 3	Rating x 4,000¥
Balance Augmenter	0.1	[4]	8	8,000¥
Damper	0.1	[1]	6	2,250¥
Select Sound Filter (Rating 1-6)	0.1	[Rating]	Rating x 3	Rating x 3,500¥
Sound Link	0.1	*	4	1,000¥
Spatial Recognizer	0.1	[2]	8	4,000¥

** Included in the basic cyberears system.*

receive one bonus die on all tests involving balance, such as climbing, walking across a narrow platform, landing after a jump, and so on.

Damper: This implant protects the user from sudden increases in sound as well as damaging sound levels. The damper adds a +2 dice pool bonus to resisting sonic attacks, including flashbangs.

Select sound filter: An implanted version of the select sound filter audio enhancement, with the difference that the maximum available Rating is 6 instead of 3.

Sound link: The audio equivalent of image link, sound link can play audio (recordings, movie soundtracks, music, etc.) from linked sources within the user's PAN (or headware memory, or datajack) directly into the user's cyberears. A sound link is a common component of immersive AR environments, adding a sonic component.

Spatial recognizer: An implanted version of the spatial recognizer enhancement.

BODYWARE

Bodyware covers the goods to make you stronger, faster, better protected, and altogether more robotic, if that's your thing. Bodyware cannot be installed into cyberlimbs unless it has a Capacity cost [in brackets]. Bodyware with a Capacity cost can be installed in cyberlimbs, costing capacity rather than Essence.

Bone lacing: Your bones are laced with lattice chains of reinforcing plastics or metals, improving their integrity and tensile strength (and adding to your body's overall weight). Bone lacing comes in three types: plastic, aluminum, and titanium—you can only have one installed at a time. It gives you extra Body for resisting physical damage, a little Armor (cumulative with other Armor, without adding to Encumbrance), and changes your unarmed combat damage, all listed in the Bone Lacing table. Bone lacing is incompatible with other augmentations that add to or alter your bones (such as bone density augmentation).

Dermal plating: Hard plastic and ceramic fiber plates are bonded to the user's skin. The plates are clearly visible, and are even more obvious to the touch, but they can be cosmetically stylized for color and surface texture. Dermal plating gives you bonus Armor equal to its Rating (cumulative with other Armor, without adding to Encumbrance). Dermal plating cannot be combined with other augmentations to the skin that provide armor, including orthoskin.

Fingertip compartment: This compartment is hidden in the hollowed out last joint of one finger, with a catch that allows the fingernail to be lifted up as an access panel, or the entire fingertip removed. A fingertip compartment allows the storage of micro-sized items, like a micro-drone, RFID tag, or datachip. Inserting or removing an object takes one Complex Action. Items held within are completely concealed, and the compartment itself has Concealability -10.

BONE LACING

MATERIAL	BODY BOOST	ARMOR	UNARMED DAMAGE
Plastic	+1	+1	(STR + 1)P
Aluminum	+2	+2	(STR + 2)P
Titanium	+3	+3	(STR + 3)P

One popular trick is to use a fingertip compartment to hold a monofilament whip (p. 422), with the fingertip acting as control weight. Extending a monofilament whip from a fingertip compartment takes a Simple Action, while spooling it back up requires one Complex Action. There's no telling how many actions it will take for people to stop being impressed at what just came out of your finger.

Wireless: Inserting or removing an item in a fingertip compartment takes a Simple Action.

Grapple gun: This is an implanted version of the grapple gun described on p. 449. It doesn't store any rope inside it, but you can attach an external rope before you shoot the grapple.

Internal air tank: The internal air tank replaces part of one lung with a pressurized internal air reserve that allows you to hold your breath for up to (Rating) hours. This allows extended underwater operations and complete protection from inhalation-vector toxin attacks as long as you're holding your breath. Activating or de-activating the tank is a Simple Action. Refilling the air tank with pressurized air through an intake valve (located under your ribcage) takes five minutes, or you can refill it through six hours of normal breathing.

Wireless: Activating or de-activating the tank is a Free Action. You're always aware of the tank's exact air level and purity.

Muscle replacement: Why take the time to exercise when you can just install a physique? Vat-grown synthetic muscles replace or augment your own, and calcium treatments and skeletal reinforcement contribute to your overall strength. It increases both your Strength and Agility attributes by its rating. It cannot be combined with other augmentations to the muscles, including muscle augmentation or muscle toner bioware.

Reaction enhancers: By replacing specific, isolated vertebrae of your spinal column with segments of superconducting material, your reactions to events become quicker. Add the Rating of reaction enhancers to your Reaction attribute (and remember to adjust Initiative and Physical limit accordingly). Reaction enhancers are incompatible with all other enhancements to Reaction, including wired reflexes.

Wireless: Reaction enhancers are compatible with a wireless wired reflexes system, and the total bonus Reaction from the two augmentations can be above +4 if both systems have wireless activated.

Skillwires: Skillwires are a system of neuromuscular controllers that overlie the body's natural nervous system; they are capable of aiding or completely overriding muscular movement, controlled by the "muscle memory" played through a skilljack (p. 452). This system allows you to use activesofts with a rating up to your skillwire's rating, but only if that activesoft is running on your implanted skilljack. Skillwires are incompatible with reflex recorder bioware.

Wireless: With the skillwire's memory cache expanded, all the skills you use with it receive +1 to the relevant inherent Limit (Physical, Mental, or Social).

Smuggling compartment: For items that won't fit in a fingertip but that you still can't afford to have found, smuggling compartments can be placed in parts of the body that can be easily hollowed out/replaced. This includes ribs and the space between them, hip bones, shoulder blades, and so forth. These compartments can allow the storage of small and mini-sized items (nothing bigger than a light pistol typically; your gamemaster will let you know if something's too big). The compartment has a Concealability of -10. Inserting or retrieving an object requires a Complex Action.

Wireless: Inserting or retrieving an object takes a Simple Action.

Wired reflexes: This highly invasive, painful, life-changing operation adds a multitude of neural boosters and adrenaline stimulators in strategic locations throughout your body work to catapult you into a whole new world where everything around you seems to move in slow motion. The system includes both manual and wireless triggers to turn the wired reflexes on and off; activating or deactivating the trigger manually requires a Complex Action, doing so wirelessly is a Simple Action. When activated, each rating point of wired reflexes gives you +1 Reaction (and accompanying bonus to Initiative) and +1D6 Initiative Die. Wired reflexes are incompatible with augmentations that affect Reaction or Initiative.

Wireless: The system is compatible with wireless reaction enhancers, and the total Reaction bonus from both systems can be above +4 if both systems have wireless active.

CYBERLIMBS

In today's world of transplant-friendly bioware, the use of cyberlimbs is sometimes viewed as crude and outdated. On the other hand, they are cheap and easy to service and upgrade, so in the end they became even more popular for the less fortunate. Since cyberlimbs are more capable than most natural limbs, and you can load them up with all sorts of wiz tech, this kind of cyberware has stayed in high demand.

Cyberskulls and -torsos are included in the "cyberlimbs" category, though they are in fact shells rather than full replacements (or actual limbs).

Cyberlimbs have their own Strength and Agility ratings. When a particular limb is used for a test (such as leading an attack with your cyberarm), use the attribute for that limb (natural or cyber); in any other case, take the average value of all limbs involved in the task. If a task requires the careful coordination of several limbs, use the

BODYWARE

DEVICES	ESSENCE	CAPACITY	AVAILABILITY	COST
Bone Lacing				
Plastic	0.5	—	8R	8,000¥
Aluminum	1	—	12R	18,000¥
Titanium	1.5	—	16R	30,000¥
Dermal Plating (Rating 1-6)	Rating x 0.5	—	(Rating x4)R	Rating x 3,000¥
Fingertip Compartment	0.1	[1]	4	3,000¥
Grapple Gun	0.5	[4]	8	5,000¥
Internal Air Tank (Rating 1-3)	0.25	[1]	Rating	Rating x 4,500¥
Muscle Replacement (Rating 1-4)	Rating x 1	—	(Rating x 5)R	Rating x 25,000¥
Reaction Enhancers (Rating 1-3)	Rating x 0.3	—	(Rating x 5)R	Rating x 13,000¥
Skillwires (Rating 1-6)	Rating x 0.1	—	Rating x 4	Rating x 20,000¥
Smuggling Compartment	0.2	[2]	6	7,500¥
Wired Reflexes (Rating 1-3)				
Rating 1	2	—	8R	39,000¥
Rating 2	3	—	12R	149,000¥
Rating 3	5	—	20R	217,000¥

value of the weakest limb. The attributes of partial limbs (including cyberhands and -feet) may be enhanced, but their attributes only apply for tests directly involving those limbs (such as a Strength Test when gripping something with an enhanced cyberhand). Cyberlimbs cannot hold any bioware, nor any cyber-implants that take up Essence rather than Capacity. Essence cost, Capacity, and other stats can be found on the Cyberlimb table.

Cyberlimbs have other useful features. They give you 1 extra damage box on your Physical Condition Monitor for each cyberlimb you possess (ignore hands and feet, and partial limbs count for half a limb). They have Capacity, letting you add cyberweapons and other cyber systems that have a Capacity cost [in brackets]. They can perform at superhuman levels with the right enhancements. Cyberlimbs can be dangerous even if they don't have cyberweapons installed— their unarmed Damage Value is (STR)P.

Cyberlimbs: These prosthetics are basic off-the-shelf models. All standard cyberlimbs come with Strength and Agility attributes of 3. These values can only be augmented by cyberlimb enhancements, not other augmentations.

Customization: You can have your cyberlimb tailored and customized to your frame and musculature. Customization lets you add to your limb's base Strength and/or Agility ratings. Each increase of either attribute increases the limb's Availability and cost. If either of your limb's attributes are increased beyond your natural maximum for that attribute, you can't use the cyberlimb (so don't overdo it), but you can still add cyberlimb enhancements. You customize your cyberlimb when you buy it; you can't customize it after purchase, but you can add enhancements.

Cyberlimbs may be either obvious or synthetic.

Obvious cyberlimbs: These implants are immediately recognizable as artificial limbs unless you cover them with clothing. They are often chromed or matte colors but visibly mechanical in nature. Some folks like them glaringly obvious and outlandish, some find the artificiality repellant and disturbing. This can affect your social dealings in some circles, especially upper-crust society and the purist crowd.

Synthetic cyberlimbs: Synthetic limbs are disguised as natural limbs. The fact that they're cybernetic gives them a -8 Concealability (the Cybertechnology skill may replace Perception for this test) when someone's just looking, but synthetic limbs are obviously artificial to the touch.

CYBERLIMB ENHANCEMENTS

Cyberlimb enhancements use up to the Capacity of the cyberlimb they enhance. There are three types of enhancement: Agility, Armor, and Strength. Physical attribute enhancements add their Rating to the appropriate attribute of the limb. Armor enhancements provide an Armor bonus equal to their rating, cumulative with other armor, without adding to Encumbrance. Each limb can have only one enhancement of each type (you can't stack two Strength 3 enhancements in the same cyberarm), but you can replace one you have with one you want.

CYBERLIMB ACCESSORIES

These items may only be installed in cyberlimbs; some may only be installed in certain cyberlimbs.

Cyberarm gyromount: This accessory must be installed in a full or partial cyberarm. When activated, counterweights pop out of your wrist and a small gyro spins up to provide you with better balance and reduced recoil for improving firing capability. Meanwhile, small children stare at you. The effects are identical to a gyro stabilization system (p. 432), only with Rating 3 (this effect is not cumulative with a worn gyro stabilization system). Activating or deactivating the system is a Simple Action.

Wireless: Activating or deactivating the system is a Free Action.

Cyberarm slide: An integral version of the hidden arm-slide, the cyberarm slide hides a hold-out, taser, or

CYBERLIMBS

LIMBS	ESSENCE	CAPACITY	AVAILABILITY	COST
Obvious limbs				
Full arm	1	[illegible]	4	15,000¥
Full leg	1	20	4	15,000¥
Hand/foot	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	5,000¥
Lower arm	0.45	10	4	10,000¥
Lower leg	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	10,000¥
Torso	1.5	10	12	20,000¥
Skull	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	10,000¥
Synthetic limbs				
Full arm	1	[illegible]	4	20,000¥
Full leg	1	10	4	20,000¥
Hand/foot	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	6,000¥
Lower arm	0.45	5	4	12,000¥
Lower leg	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	12,000¥
Torso	1.5	5	12	25,000¥
Skull	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	15,000¥
CUSTOMIZATION	**ESSENCE**	**CAPACITY**	**AVAILABILITY**	**COST**
Each STR or AGI point above 3	—	—	Cyberlimb + 1	+5,000¥

CYBERLIMB ENHANCEMENTS

ENHANCEMENT	ESSENCE	CAPACITY	AVAILABILITY	COST
Agility (Rating 1-3)	—	Rating	(Rating x 3)R	Rating x 6,500¥
Armor (Rating 1-3)	—	[illegible]	Rating x 5	Rating x 3,000¥
Strength (Rating 1-3)	—	Rating	(Rating x 3)R	Rating x 6,500¥

CYBERLIMB ACCESSORIES

ACCESSORY	ESSENCE	CAPACITY	AVAILABILITY	COST
Cyberarm gyromount	—	[8]	12F	6,000¥
Cyberarm slide	—	[3]	12R	3,000¥
Cyber holster	—	[5]	8R	2,000¥
Hydraulic jacks (Rating 1-6)	—	[Rating]	9	Rating x 2,500¥
Large smuggling compartment	—	[5]	6	8,000¥

light pistol inside your cyberarm, concealing it from normal vision. As a Free Action, you can ready the weapon in the slide.

Cyber holster: You can hold a taser or any pistol- or smaller-sized weapon within the holster, completely enclosed until you activate it. Inserting or retrieving a weapon takes one Simple Action. A cyber holster can also be used as a smuggling compartment to store items no larger than a pistol (the gamemaster has final discretion).

Wireless: Readying a weapon from the holster is a Free Action.

Hydraulic jacks: This implant requires you to have two cyberlegs with a hydraulic jack of identical Ratings in each leg. Each Rating point adds a +1 to your Physical limit for jumping and sprinting, adds twenty percent to your maximum jump distance, and reduces your falling distance by two meters for the purpose of calculating falling damage.

Wireless: The jacks add a +1 dice pool bonus to tests involving jumping, sprinting, or lifting with your legs.

Large smuggling compartment: This is a larger version of the smuggling compartment (p. 455). It can hold something the size of a heavy pistol or a small SMG (gamemaster's discretion—think breadbox size as a guide). Getting something out of or putting something into it takes a Complex Action.

Wireless: Getting something out of or putting something into it takes a Simple Action.

IMPLANT WEAPONS

CYBERGUNS	ACCURACY	DAMAGE	AP	MODE	RC	AMMO
Cyber hold-out	4 (6)	6P	—	SA	—	2 (m) / 6 (c)
Light cyber pistol	6 (8)	7P	—	SA	—	10 (m) / 15 (c)
Cyber machine pistol	4 (6)	6P	—	SA / BF	1	18 (m) / 32 (c)
Heavy cyber pistol	4 (6)	7P	–1	SA	—	8 (m) / 12 (c)
Cyber submachine gun	4 (6)	7P	—	SA / BF	2	18 (m) / 32 (c)
Cyber shotgun	4 (6)	10P	–1	SS	—	4 (m) / 10 (c)
Cyber microgrenade launcher	4 (6)	as Grenade	as Grenade	SS	—	2 (m) / 6 (c)

CYBER IMPLANT WEAPONS

Cyber-implant weapons can be installed into cyberlimbs or directly into the meat. They're popular with the denizens of urban wastelands like the Barrens, and with street samurai who never want to go anywhere unarmed.

Cyberguns: Generally speaking, these are mounted in a cyberarm or directly into a natural arm, but you could install one in a leg or even your torso. Cyberguns are distinct from cyber holsters in that the gun itself can be controlled and fired directly, as an extension of your body. Depending on the size of the gun, cyberguns take up part of your forearm or replace your arm altogether, with the functional parts of the arm built around the gun. Smaller cyberguns fire through a hidden port in the palm or knuckles, while larger cyberguns fold back the user's hand at the wrist.

For extra concealment, cyberguns are built from mostly non-metallic compounds, and any metallic parts are incorporated into the (cyber) arm's structure. All cyberguns have internal magazines (m) and can be equipped with a hidden external ammo port. However, once you attach a clip to the side of your forearm or the back of your elbow, the cybergun becomes kind of obvious. Laser sights and silencers/sound suppressors are also available; other weapon accessories can't be installed in cyberguns. All cyberguns are pre-equipped with smartgun systems (p. 433).

Cyber melee weapons: For a quarter of a century now, cyber-implant melee weapons have been the classic, favored toys of razor guys, from street muscle to professional urban samurai. They are available as cyberarm upgrades, but can also be installed directly into the flesh. Cyber weapons can be readied via muscle flexture, neural impulse, or wireless signal. Attacks with cyber melee weapons use Unarmed Combat skill and the Physical limit.

Hand razors are blades two to three centimeters long, made of chromed steel or carbon fiber. They either slide out from beneath your fingernails or replace them entirely. *Hand blades* slip out the side of the hand opposite the thumb, parallel to the hand, and while they are universally thin and sharp, they come in a variety of shapes and styles. *Spurs* are one to three blades or spikes protruding from the back of your wrist or your knuckles, sticking out from your fist as much as thirty centimeters. The *shock hand* is like a shock glove built into the palm of your hand, perfect for inflicting a nasty shock to anything it comes into contact with. Shock hands deal Electricity damage (p. 170) and have ten charges in each hand; when plugged in they recharge at a rate of one charge per ten seconds.

IMPLANT WEAPONS

CYBERGUNS	ESS	CAP	AVAIL	COST
Hold-out pistol	0.1	[2]	8R	2,000¥
Light pistol	0.25	[4]	10R	3,900¥
Machine pistol	0.5	[6]	12R	3,500¥
Heavy pistol	0.5	[6]	12R	4,300¥
Submachine gun	1	[8]	12R	4,800¥
Shotgun	1.25	[10]	12R	8,500¥
Grenade launcher	1.5	[15]	20F	30,000¥
External clip port	0.1	[1]	—	+1,000¥
Laser sight	—	[1]	—	+1,000¥
Silencer/suppressor	—	[2]	—	+1,000¥
CYBER MELEE	**ESS**	**CAP**	**AVAIL**	**COST**
Hand blade (retractable)	0.25	[2]	10F	2,500¥
Hand razors (retractable)	0.2	[2]	8F	1,250¥
Spurs (retractable)	0.3	[3]	12F	5,000¥
Shock hand	0.25	[4]	8R	5,000¥

IMPLANT WEAPONS

WEAPONS	REACH	DAMAGE	AP
Hand blade	—	(STR + 2)P	–2
Hand razors	—	(STR + 1)P	–1
Spurs	—	(STR + 3)P	–2
Shock hand	—	9S(e)	–1

BIOWARE

Bioware is subtler, more holistic, and less invasive than cyberware, at the cost of being substantially pricier. Instead of replacing body parts with machines, bioware augments the body's own functions and integrates transplanted organs that function as natural features. The application of biotechnology is a tricky business, as the fine balance of homeostasis between the body's organic systems must be maintained. In the last decade, bionics and bio-engineering techniques have taken bioware from cutting edge to commonplace. Bioware is more expensive monetarily, costs less Essence, and is much harder to spot. Also—and we'd like to think this goes without saying—bioware has no wireless capability at all.

Adrenaline pump: This enhanced gland is implanted in the lower abdomen, connected to both supradrenal glands. When dormant, the pump is merely a reservoir for adrenaline. When activated, a small muscular sac contracts, sending a surge of concentrated adrenaline into the blood stream. Physical and emotional stress can force your pump to activate if you fail a Composure Test (p. 152); otherwise you can trigger it as a Free Action.

While the pump is active, you ignore injury modifiers and don't fall unconscious, even if your Stun Condition Monitor is filled. You can't rest, but the adrenaline pump's Rating is added to your Strength, Agility, Reaction, and Willpower attributes. The pump works for Rating x 1D6 Combat Turns (the pump can't be switched off early). When time's up, you crash and take Stun damage equal to the number of Combat Turns the pump was active (use your natural Body + Willpower to resist the damage).

After the effects end, your attribute values return to normal and you stop ignoring injury modifiers or unconsciousness from Stun damage. After use, the pump requires 1 hour to regenerate its supply. During that time, it cannot be activated.

Bone density augmentation: The molecular structure of your bones is altered to increase density and tensile strength. Ligaments are strengthened, and the increased bone density increases your weight a bit. Your Body attribute is increased by the bone density Rating for the purpose of damage resistance tests. You also deal Physical damage in unarmed combat, based on the Rating of the augmentation (see the Bone Density Augmentation table). Bone density augmentation is incompatible with other augmentations to the bones, including bone lacing cyberware.

Cat's eyes: These transgenic vat-grown implants are very literally cats' eyes with a modified DNA profile and occipital connecting structures. The structure of cat's eyes amplifies light and enhances night vision, providing low-light vision. Cat's eyes are slit and reflective, just like, well, a cat's. This bioware is obviously not compatible with cyberware eye enhancements or replacements.

Enhanced articulation: A number of procedures like joint-surface coating, re-lubrication, and tendon and ligament augmentation lead to more fluid muscle and joint action. Enhanced articulation provides you with a +1 dice pool modifier to your Escape Artist skill and a +1 increase to your Physical limit (cumulative with other limit modifiers).

Muscle augmentation: This biological weaving treatment enhances existing muscle tissue, rather than replacing it with vat-grown muscles. Specially grown muscle cables are woven into existing muscle fibers, enhancing muscle mass and brute strength while providing a bulkier look. Muscle augmentation adds its rating to your Strength. This bioware is incompatible with augmentations that increase Strength, including the muscle replacements cyberware.

Muscle toner: This treatment increases muscle fiber elasticity in existing muscle tension, resulting in increased muscle tension and flexibility while providing a smooth and ropy physique. Muscle toner adds its rating to your Agility. This bioware is incompatible with augmentations that increase Agility, including the muscle replacements cyberware.

Orthoskin: A web of biofibers in the skin provides the equivalent of personal armor while being virtually indistinguishable from natural skin. Orthoskin adds its Rating to your Armor Rating, and is cumulative with other Armor. Orthoskin cannot be combined with skin augmentations that give you Armor, including dermal plating.

Pathogenic defense: This enhanced spleen can produce more effective and aggressive white blood cells for combating pathogens. Pathogenic defense adds its Rating to Disease Resistance Tests.

Platelet factories: Platelet factories increase your body's ability to handle Physical damage by accelerating the production of platelets within bone marrow and their concentration in the blood, which helps stop bleeding faster. Any time you would take 2 or more boxes of damage to your Physical Condition Monitor, reduce the damage by one box.

Skin pocket: This skin flap can be located anywhere on your body. A nerveless "sheath" of flesh concealed by the flap is perfect for hiding a small object—it's the bioware version of a smuggling compartment (p. 455). The skin pocket has a Concealability of -10. It takes a Complex Action to add or remove an item from a skin pocket.

Suprathyroid gland: Placed on top of your existing thyroid gland, the suprathyroid gland supersedes the metabolic functions of your thyroid. The enhanced metabolism produces more energy, supercharging you. While you're supercharged, you might want to supersize—to fuel your optimized metabolism, you'll need to eat twice as much as normal. You get a +1 to your Agility, Body, Reaction, and Strength, along with a 25 percent boost in lifestyle costs. And you might get a bit hyperactive.

Symbiotes: Tailored micro-organisms in your bloodstream greatly enhance your healing. Add the Rating of the symbiotes as a dice pool modifier on healing tests

BIOWARE

BASIC BIOWARE	ESSENCE	AVAIL	COST
Adrenaline pump (Rating 1–3)	Rating x 0.75	(Rating x 6)F	Rating x 55,000¥
Bone density augmentation (Rating 1–4)	Rating x 0.3	(Rating x 4)	Raxing x 5,000¥
Cat's eye	0.1	4	4,000¥
Enhanced articulation	0.3	12	24,000¥
Muscle augmentation (Rating 1–4)	Rating x 0.2	(Rating x 5)R	Rating x 31,000¥
Muscle toner (Rating 1–4)	Rating x 0.2	(Rating x 5)R	Rating x 32,000¥
Orthoskin (Rating 1–4)	Rating x 0.25	(Rating x 4)R	Rating x 6,000¥
Pathogenic Defense (Rating 1–6)	Rating x 0.1	(Rating x 2)	Rating x 4,500¥
Platelet factories	0.2	12	17,000¥
Skin pocket	0.1	4	12,000¥
Suprathyroid gland	0.7	20R	140,000¥
Symbiotes (Rating 1–4)	Rating x 0.2	(Rating x 5)	Rating x 3,500¥
Synthacardium (Rating 1–3)	Rating x 0.1	(Rating x 4)	Rating x 30,000¥
Tailored pheromones (Rating 1–3)	Rating x 0.2	(Rating x 4)R	Rating x 31,000¥
Toxin extractor (Rating 1–6)	Rating x 0.2	(Rating x 3)	Rating x 4,800¥
Tracheal filter (Rating 1–6)	Rating x 0.1	(Rating x 3)	Rating x 4,500¥

UNARMED COMBAT ATTACKS	REACH	DAMAGE	AP
Bone density Rating 1	—	(STR)P	—
Bone density Rating 2	—	(STR + 1)P	—
Bone density Rating 3	—	(STR + 2)P	—
Bone density Rating 4	—	(STR + 3)P	—

(Physical and Stun). However, the symbiotes have unusual dietary requirements that must be met to keep them alive. You need to pay (Rating x 200) nuyen per month for special symbiote food, although if you have a High Lifestyle or better it's covered.

Synthacardium: Artificially enhanced myocardium allows cardiovascular functions to be performed more efficiently, enabling the heart to keep the blood better oxygenated. The synthacardium adds its Rating as a dice pool bonus to your tests using skills in the Athletics skill group.

Tailored pheromones: These pheromones are specially tailored to subtly influence others and can be released at will. Tailored pheromones add their Rating as a dice pool modifier to your skill tests for skills in the Acting and Influence skill groups, but only when the person you're using them on is within a comfortable conversation range—if they can't smell you, the pheromones don't work. Tailored pheromones also work on you to make you feel better about yourself; increase your Social limit by the Rating. Tailored pheromones have no effect on magical abilities and tests.

Toxin extractor: A specially cultivated cluster of cells in your liver improves its filtering capabilities. The toxin extractor adds its Rating as a dice pool modifier to all your Toxin Resistance Tests (**Toxins, Drugs, and BTLs**, p. 408).

Tracheal Filter: Implanted at the top of your trachea, this organ can absorb airborne impurities and keep them from reaching your lungs. The filter adds its Rating as a dice pool modifier to Toxin Resistance Tests versus inhalation vector toxins (**Toxins, Drugs, and BTLs**, p. 408).

CULTURED BIOWARE

Cultured bioware must be tailor-made for the body in which it will eventually find a home. This means it is more expensive and takes longer to acquire than the off-the-shelf kind.

Cerebral booster: The convolutions and gyri of your cerebrum are augmented and amplified with additional nervous tissue, improving overall brain function. Your cerebral booster increases your Logic attribute by its Rating.

Damage compensator: Damage compensators are essentially cut-offs stored in the nervous pathways that report pain from the body back to your brain. You ignore a number of damage boxes (your choice of Physical, Stun, or a combination of the two) equal to the compensator's Rating before determining your injury modifiers.

Mnemonic enhancer: This highly concentrated growth of grey matter gets attached to the brain's memory centers, improving both short- and long-term memory. Add the enhancer's Rating as a dice pool bonus to your Knowledge, Language, and memory-related tests as well as to your Mental limit.

Pain editor: This cluster of specialized nervous tissue is designed to filter sensory stimuli. If the pain editor is active, this allows you to ignore all injury modifiers, and you even stay conscious when your Stun Condition Monitor is completely full. You feel no pain—you're blissfully, dangerously, recklessly unaware of the extent of damage you've taken without either performing a self-examination (Observe In Detail action) or being informed by a biomonitor (p. 450). While active, the pain editor increases your Willpower by 1 and decreases your Intuition by 1. Additionally, all tactile Perception Tests you make receive a dice pool modifier of -4.

Reflex recorder: The first step in this particular recipe is growing some extra neural material in a small cluster. When that's fully cooked, you drop it in the skull and attach it to the nerves for motor reflexes. Then boom, you've got a metahuman with better muscle memory. The reflex recorder adds 1 to the Rating of a specific skill linked to a Physical attribute. Multiple recorders may be taken for multiple skills, but you can't implant two reflex recorders for the same skill. Reflex recorder bioware is incompatible with skillwires cyberware.

Sleep regulator: The sleep regulator is a modification to the hypothalamus, allowing for longer periods of

CULTURED BIOWARE

BIOWARE	ESS	AVAIL	COST
Cerebral booster (Rating 1-3)	Rating x 0.2	(Rating x 6)	Rating x 31,500¥
Damage compensators (Rating 1-12)	Rating x 0.1	(Rating x 3)F	Rating x 2,000¥
Mnemonic enhancer (Rating 1-3)	Rating x 0.1	(Rating x 5)	Rating x 9,000¥
Pain editor	0.3	18F	48,000¥
Reflex recorder (Skill)	0.1	10	14,000¥
Sleep regulator	0.1	6	12,000¥
Synaptic booster (Rating 1-3)	Rating x 0.5	(Rating x 6)R	Rating x 95,000¥

wakefulness, an incredibly useful advantage for anyone with any profession, not just shadowrunners. You need less sleep per day and the sleep you get is deep and restful (and harder to wake you up from). The sleep regulator lets you get by with three hours of sleep each night and stay awake for twice as long as normal before having to resist sleep deprivation fatigue (p. 172). Resting hours for healing purposes are not affected.

Synaptic booster: The nerve cells making up the spinal cord are both broadened and replicated with this bioware, allowing for more neural bandwidth. The result is a much faster reaction time. The booster confers a bonus of +1 Reaction (and accompanying adjustment to Initiative and Physical limit) and +1D6 Initiative Die per point of Rating. The synaptic booster cannot be combined with any other form of Reaction or Initiative enhancement.

MAGICAL EQUIPMENT

Magical Supplies and Spell Formulae are described in **Magic**, p. 316.

MAGICAL EQUIPMENT

FOCI	AVAIL	COST
Enchanting Focus	(Force x 3)R	Force x 5,000¥
Metamagic Focus	(Force x 3)R	Force x 9,000¥
Power Focus	(Force x 4)R	Force x 18,000¥
Qi Focus	(Force x 3)R	Force x 3,000¥
Spell Focus	(Force x 3)R	Force x 4,000¥
Spirit Focus	(Force x 3)R	Force x 4,000¥
Weapon Focus	(Force x 4)R	Force x 7,000¥

FORMULAE	AVAIL	COST
Focus Formula	as Focus	Focus Cost x 0.25
Spell Formula		
Combat	8R	2,000¥
Detection	4R	500¥
Health	4R	500¥
Illusion	8R	1,000¥
Manipulation	8R	1,500¥

MAGICAL SUPPLIES	AVAIL	COST
Magical Lodge Materials	Force x 2	Force x 500¥
Reagents, per dram	—	20¥

VEHICLE MODIFICATIONS

MODIFICATION	AVAIL	COST
Rigger interface	4	1,000¥
Standard weapon mount	9F	2,500¥
Heavy weapon mount	14F	5,000¥
Manual operation	+1	+500¥

VEHICLES AND DRONES

Vehicle attributes used in combat are defined in **Vehicles**, p. 198. Vehicles also have a non-combat attribute, **Seating**, which determines both how many people can fit in the vehicle (including the operator) and also, in a pinch, additional cargo space—one 'seat' can also be used to hold up to 250 kilograms of cargo. Seating (for people) can be exceeded by up to 150 percent by stuffing people inside, but doing so decreases the vehicle's Speed and Handling attributes by one. So you can have that extra person ride on the back of a dirtbike, or stuff a more-than-safe amount of people into the back of a sedan, but your vehicle's not going to provide quite its usual kick.

Rigger interface: When added to a vehicle, this lets you use a control rig to jump in and control it directly through immersive virtual reality. The standard rigger interface allows the vehicle to be controlled with either a direct fiber-optic cable or wireless link. See **Being the Machine**, p. 265.

Weapon mounts: Vehicles may be equipped with a number of weapon mounts equal to their unaugmented Body ÷ 3 (round down). *Standard* weapon mounts may hold any assault rifle or smaller-sized weapon and 250 rounds of ammo. *Heavy* weapon mounts count as two weapon mounts and can hold any weapon and up to

SIMILAR MODELS

No two vehicles are created equal, but many are created damn close. Every commercially available vehicle listed here has numerous cousins, copycats, clones, and competitors that have the same name but different branding, make, and model year. These add an opportunity for you to define your character further through his personal preference and brand awareness, without cluttering up the game system with dozens of near-identical cars. There are no differences between "similar models" except branding and, at the gamemaster's discretion, brand-related price tweaks and maybe a point or so difference in an attribute or two.

VEHICLE	SIMILAR MODELS
Dodge Scoot	Hyundai Hopper, Entertainment Systems Papoose
Harley-Davidson Scorpion	BMW Blitzen, Gaz-Niki Titan
Yamaha Growler	Evo Falcon, Gaz-Niki Wolverine
Suzuki Mirage	Yamaha Rapier, Thundercloud Contrail
Chrysler-Nissan Jackrabbit	Peugeot 112, Opel Luna
Honda Spirit	Wuxing Breezer, Toyota Gazelle
Hyundai Shin-Hyung	BMW 400GT, GMC Commodore
Eurocar Westwind 3000	Porsche Aguilar, Ferrari Diabolus
Ford Americar	Mercury Comet, Honda Citizen
S-K Bentley Concordat	GMC Cadillac Nocturne, BMW X89
Mitsubishi Nightsky	Rolls Royce Phaeton
Toyota Gopher	Gaz P–179, Wuxing Peng You 4x4
GMC Bulldog Step-Van	Renault-Fiat Eurovan, Aztechnology Governor
Rover Model 2072	Ares Humvee, Toyota Coaster
Ares Roadmaster	Esprit Industries Sororita, Renraku Kamekichi
Samuvani-Criscraft Otter	GMC Outrider, Celebrian Nymph
Yongkang-Gala Trinity	Zemlya-Poltava Crest, Celebrian Dart
Morgan Cutlass	Surfstar Marine Seacop, Messerschmidt-Kawasaki Harbor Sentry
Proteus Lamprey	Kalmaar Seefuchs, Toyota TLM–2
Vulkan Electronaut	Proteus Explorer, Aztechnology Jade Diver
Artemis Industries Nightwing	IFMU Spatz, Suzuki Wingman
Cessna C750	Lear-Cessna Rover
Renault Fiat-Fokker Tundra 9	Airbus JPFB-03, Toyota TX13
Ares Dragon	Hughes Stallion
Northrup Wasp	Lockheed Kestrel, Renraku Dragonfly
Ares Venture	Cascade Skraacha, Zhejiang Shenying Industries Raptor
GMC Banshee	Aztechnology Lobo
Federated Boeing Commuter	Hughes-Aerospace Daytrader

500 rounds of belted ammo or up to Body rockets/missiles. All weapon mounts are operated remotely and can target a ninety-degree arc of fire (horizontal and vertical). *Manual* operation can be added, but only for vehicles, not drones, and at extra cost.

BIKES

Bikes are operated with the Pilot Ground Craft skill. Most come available with either electric or hybrid biofuel engines.

Dodge Scoot: This is an electric-powered scooter with a top speed of don't make me laugh. It's compact, fuel-efficient, and super-affordable, but no self-respecting shadowrunners would be caught dead on one.

Harley-Davidson Scorpion: This bike is a classic, heavy-bodied, heavily chromed road hog, armored and styled for intimidation. Very popular with a certain type of go-ganger, and with big, tough orks and trolls who don't worry about little things like "embodying a cliche." This bike is even tough enough to be used in the combat biking circuit.

Yamaha Growler: This is a durable off-road bike used in motocross and other extreme sports events, usually seen in photos and footage with both the bike and its rider covered in dust. It's popular with thrill seekers, wilderness buffs, and light-freight drug smugglers.

Suzuki Mirage: This Japanese racing bike is a fast, sleek speed machine, popular with the other type of go-ganger—it's worth mentioning that both the Scorpion and the Mirage are popular with the Cutters, but the Ancients show a notable preference for the Mirage and its cousins and competitors. Like the Scorpion, the Mirage also sees some use in the combat bike circuit.

SUZUKI MIRAGE

CARS

Cars are operated with the Pilot Ground Craft skill. Most come available with either electric or hybrid biofuel engines.

Chrysler-Nissan Jackrabbit: This cheap, ubiquitous electric subcompact was made in North America for decades. Even after North American production ceased, dozens of generic rip-offs were contract produced

VEHICLES

GROUNDCRAFT	HANDL*	SPEED*	ACCEL	BOD	ARMOR	PILOT	SENSOR	SEATS	AVAIL	COST
Dodge Scoot	4/3	3	1	4	4	1	1	1	—	3,000¥
Harley-Davidson Scorpion	4/3	4	2	8	9	1	2	1	—	12,000¥
Yamaha Growler	4/5	3/4	1	5	5	1	1	1	—	5,000¥
Suzuki Mirage	5/3	6	3	5	6	1	2	1	—	8,500¥
C-N Jackrabbit	4/3	3	2	8	4	1	2	2	—	10,000¥
Honda Spirit	3/2	4	2	8	6	1	2	2	—	12,000¥
Hyundai Shin-Hyung	5/4	6	3	10	6	1	2	4	—	28,500¥
Eurocar Westwind 3000	6/4	7	3	10	8	3	5	2	12	110,000¥
Ford Americar	4/3	3	2	11	6	1	2	4	—	16,000¥
SK-Bentley Concordat	5/4	5	2	12	12	3	4	4	10	65,000¥
Mitsubishi Nightsky	4/3	4	2	15	15	3	5	8	16	320,000¥
Toyota Gopher	5/5	4	2	14	10	1	2	3	—	25,000¥
GMC Bulldog	3/3	3	1	16	12	1	2	6	—	35,000¥
Rover Model 2072	5/5	4	2	15	12	2	4	6	10	68,000¥
Ares Roadmaster	3/3	3	1	18	18	3	3	8	8	52,000¥

** Handling and Speed are listed as On Road/Off Road when slashes are used.*

throughout the third world. The sheer amount of Chrysler-Nissan' Jackrabbits on the road means the older model must continue to be supported.

Honda Spirit: This sleek three-wheeled two-seater features an electric engine and is popular with commuting sprawl dwellers. The spirit has a bubble hood for bad weather, with a chemical coating "guaranteed to neutralize 89 percent of acid rain."

Hyundai Shin-Hyung: This cheap four-door sports sedan is a fast, powerful car for corp youth to show off their moxie to their friends in a socially acceptable and constructive way. Available for low prices out of the box, the Shin-Hyung is often heavily customized by tuners and street racing enthusiasts to the point of being far more functional and barely recognizable.The Shin-Hyung can be bought cheap, goes fast, and handles well. What else could you want? These facts have made it popular with Triad and Yakuza elements as well as more affluent street gangs and slumming rich-kids.

Eurocar Westwind 3000: This sleek, classic, low-slung speed machine mixes business and pleasure into perfection. Situated perfectly at the intersection of luxury and performance, this is a turbo-charged sportscar that is only a pipe dream for most slags working their way up through the shadows. Its sexy lines and powerful engine make it consistently powerful among muscle car enthusiasts.

Ford Americar: This four-door sedan has an affordable price point, capacious luggage storage, and safety features that, combined, made it the bestselling family car in North America for decades before losing out to the Mercury Comet. The Americar is reliable and economical, but not fast or sexy. If you need to ferry four metahumans from point A to point B, a Ford Americar is probably the most straightforward and anonymous way to do so. It's not flashy, and it's not stylish, but sometimes flashy gets you killed.

Saeder-Krupp-Bentley Concordat: This luxury sedan is stylish, stately, and impressive. It is fast and powerful, comfortable and safe, opulently appointed, and most importantly, a status symbol. The SK-Bentley Concordat is the kind of car that simstars and orxploitation rappers drive; a runner behind the wheel of one has made the big time indeed. Either that, or they stole it.

Mitsubishi Nightsky: Decadent, secure, and high-tech, this armored limousine isn't for you. It's for corp executives, media stars, and Mr. Johnson; only in their company will you enjoy its spacious interior and luxurious amenities.

TRUCKS AND VANS

Trucks and vans are operated with the Pilot Ground Craft skill. Most come available with either electric or hybrid biofuel engines.

Toyota Gopher: This is a classic pickup with great off-road suspension, superior handling, and a loyal customer base. This low-maintenance design is a bit dated but sees widespread use in third world nations and rural areas, especially the NAN. It's not the most wiz thing you could drive, although its powerful engine and storage space could certainly come in handy if you have some heavy duty hauling to do.

GMC Bulldog Step-Van: This long-running top seller from GM is a capacious (and armored!) delivery van favored by everybody from legitimate shipping and logistics companies to security agencies to heavy mob crews

to shadowrunners. It has lots of room for people, gear, or whatever you need to move, plus an engine and chassis that can take a ton of punishment and keep on running.

Rover Model 2072: Bigger and more powerful than it needs to be, this luxury van is the top-of-the-line in its class, and just as much of a status symbol as the Bentley. On top of that, it packs intimidating size and all the accessories for cruising through the wilderness. Or, more commonly, through elite urban neighborhoods. This expensive vehicle is gaining more and more popularity with discreet security details for its combination of status and security.

Ares Roadmaster: This is a fragging armored car, chummer, and you should be grateful you can buy it legally. Legitimately used to move goods over land that need secure transportation, the Roadmaster may have the speed and handling of the tank that it is, and it may be anything but subtle, but it can reliably shrug off small arms fire and even grenades. For many teams, that's a worthwhile tradeoff.

BOATS

Boats are operated with the Pilot Watercraft skill.

Samuvani Criscraft Otter: This mid-size craft is mainly used for pleasure boating, fishing, light hauling, and utility work. A five-meter-long vessel with a fiberglass open hull, the Otter is a well-rounded, general-purpose boat that doesn't stand out in any one area.

Yongkang Gala Trinity: This small, fast-moving speedboat is known as a smuggler's craft. It's generally built on the spot using prepared components and a hull kit, assembled with its payload built right into the hull; then on arrival, the Trinity is taken apart around its cargo, with the profit of the haul compensating for the fact the boat was used only once.

Morgan Cutlass: This commonly seen patrol boat comes equipped with a pair of heavy, manually operated weapon mounts (usually outfitted with LMGs) and a high-quality sensor suite.

SUBMARINES

Submarines are operated with the Pilot Watercraft skill.

Proteus Lamprey: This underwater sea-sled is used for underwater inspection and transportation. with riding positions for up to four scuba-equipped passengers (while closest to a submarine, the Lamprey does not actually protect its passengers from the rigors of the deep). Military models of the lamprey are used for aquatic insertions by specially equipped naval spec ops forces, like the UCAS Navy SEAL teams. The lamprey also includes a drone rack for a single seaworthy drone of medium or smaller size for exploring at deeper depths than the passengers can safely go.

Vulkan Electronaut: This two-person mini-sub is the cheapest available in its class and is available in a wide selection of utility models. It is often used on patrol and short-range reconnaissance duties and resupply runs, but it can also be leveraged by shadowrunner teams looking for unexpected ways to approach nautical targets.

FIXED-WING AIRCRAFT

Fixed wing aircraft are operated with the Pilot Aircraft skill.

Artemis Industries Nightwing: The Nightwing is an older model ultra-light, closely resembling those that originated in the late twentieth century. The Nightwing has a shrouded electric motor to minimize aircraft sound and reduce heat emissions—while this has a stated purpose of preventing noise pollution and environmental impact, it has the side effect of making the small, glider-like craft quite stealthy. The Nightwing is popular with rural aviation enthusiasts, smugglers, and anyone who favors a classic stealth insertion.

Cessna C750: This dual-prop civilian plane can carry passengers, haul light cargo, or serve as a surveillance plane. Its light frame and economy, as well as its affordable price point and commonality, have ensured that some see use in smuggling operations.

Renault-Fiat Fokker Tundra-9: This amphibious jet is great for heavy cargo and personnel hauling and doesn't need an airfield to land. It is used by corporate logistics teams for resupply of out-of-the-way facilities and by Awakened game hunters and poachers to reach their dangerous game. This craft is amphibious and comes standard with buoyancy and flotation upgrades, meaning it can take off from land and water.

ROTORCRAFT

Helicopters are operated with the Pilot Aircraft skill.

Ares Dragon: This versatile, solidly built, double-prop cargo helicopter is used in a wide variety of roles in urban and remote areas all over the Sixth World. It is often used for heavy cargo hauling ops up occasionally in a military capacity as a hybrid gunship/troop transport by Knight Errant and their elite Firewatch special forces.

Nissan Hound: This is a bleeding-edge transport helicopter used by the Imperial Japanese Marines, along with Special Forces units around the globe. To no one's surprise, it is also quite popular with corporate security

VEHICLES

WATERCRAFT	HANDL	SPEED	ACCEL	BOD	ARMOR	PILOT	SENSOR	SEATS	AVAIL	COST
Samuvani Otter	4	3	2	12	6	2	2	8	—	21,000¥
Yongkang Gala Trinity	5	6	3	10	6	1	1	3	8	37,000¥
Morgan Cutlass	5	4	2	16	10	3	5	6	14R	96,000¥
Proteus Lamprey	3	2	1	6	6	1	3	4	—	14,000¥
Vulkan Electronaut	3	3	1	12	10	4	4	2	10	108,000¥

AIRCRAFT	HANDL	SPEED	ACCEL	BOD	ARMOR	PILOT	SENSOR	SEATS	AVAIL	COST
Artemis Nightwing	6	3	1	4	0	1	1	1	8	20,000¥
Cessna C750	3	5	3	18	4	2	2	4	8	146,000¥
R-F Fokker Tundra-9	3	4	3	20	10	3	3	24	12	300,000¥
Ares Dragon	4	4	3	22	8	3	3	12	12	355,000¥
Nissan Hound	5	4	3	16	16	2	4	12	13R	425,000¥
Northrup Wasp	5	5	3	10	8	3	3	1	12R	86,000¥
Ares Venture	5	7	4	16	14	4	4	6	12F	400,000¥
GMC Banshee	6	8	4	20	18	4	6	12	24F	2,500,000¥
Fed-Boing Commuter	3	3	3	16	8	3	3	30	10	350,000¥

rapid response forces, especially those belonging to japanacorps, including the Renraku Red Samurai. It comes armed with two weapon mounts to ensure that its precious cargo survives even the hottest dustoffs and diciest landings.

Northrup Wasp: This one-man rotorcraft is designed for police and security service. A wasp, lightly armored and equipped with a heavy weapon mount, is the standard, rote corporate security response to ever-mounting shadowrunner problems.

VTOL/VSTOL

Vectored thrust crafts are operated with the Pilot Aircraft skill.

Ares Venture: This small, cheap LAV is manufactured from off-the-shelf parts at environmentally friendly plants for use by smugglers worldwide. The Venture sees a wide variety of legitimate, security, and military use besides being a favorite of smugglers on a budget. It is often used as a cargo or passenger transport, and heavily armed and armored variants exist for patrol duty. The Venture sells well among third-world customers.

GMC Banshee: This lightning-fast, supersonic aircraft is the classic, iconic t-bird, and it has the armor, armaments, and sensor suites to prove it. This LAV sees military use in reconnaissance and courier duty, and is a favorite of elite smugglers for white-knuckle illegal border crossings, with its ability to fly under the radar through canyons at high speeds.

Federated Boeing Commuter: This tilt-wing passenger aircraft sees heavy use as an inter-city shuttle, hopping between corporate-controlled aerospaceports and ferrying sararimen around the world. Shadowrunners are unlikely to use it as their own equipment, but they may run into it, particularly if they're on an extraction or executive-protection detail.

MICRODRONES

The skill used to pilot a microdrone varies from drone to drone.

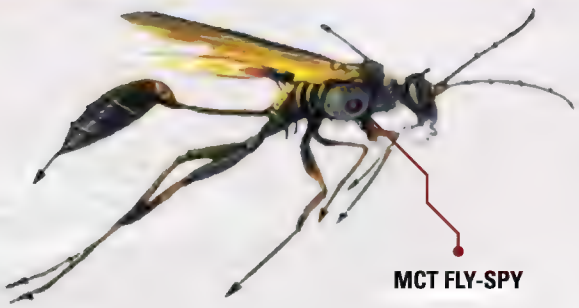
Shiawase Kanmushi: This is a four-legged "bug" crawler drone that is hard to tell from a natural insect at a glance. It's ideal for penetrating confined areas, and its gecko-tipped extremities and light weight render it capable of crawling on walls and ceilings; it is, however, quite fragile, and merely being stepped on or a tag eraser can easily destroy it. This drone is operated with the Pilot Walker skill.

Sikorsky-Bell Microskimmer: Quiet and durable, this disc-shaped skimmer is smaller than a frisbee and can even skim over water. It moves with small and rather weak hoverjets. It is easier to spot than the Kanmushi, but still very small. It is operated with the Pilot Groundcraft skill; the hovercraft specialization applies.

MINIDRONES

Horizon Flying Eye: This spherical flying drone uses omnidirectional thrust nozzles to stay airborne. Just about eyeball-sized, it can roll itself on the ground, though it needs to fly to overcome obstructions like stairs and curbs. A version with a built-in flash-pak and smoke grenade costs 500¥ extra; detonating them destroys the drone. Use Pilot Aircraft to operate.

DRONES	HANDL	SPEED	ACCEL	BOD	ARMOR	PILOT	SENSOR	SEATS	AVAIL	COST
Shiawase Kanmushi	4	2	1	0	0	3	3	—	8	1,000¥
S-B Microskimmer	3	3	1	0	0	3	3	—	8	1,000¥
MCT Fly-Spy	4	3	2	1	0	3	3	—	8	2,000¥
Horizon Flying Eye	4	3	2	1	0	3	3	—	8	2,000¥
Aztechnology Crawler	4	3	1	3	3	4	3	—	4	4,000¥
Lockheed Optic-X2	4	4	3	3	2	3	3	—	7D	21,000¥
Ares Duelist	3	3	1	4	4	3	3	—	5R	4,500¥
GM-Nissan Doberman	5	3	1	4	4	3	3	—	4R	5,000¥
MCT-Nissan Roto-Drone	4	4	2	4	4	3	3	—	6	5,000¥
C-D Dalmatian	5	5	3	5	5	3	3	—	6R	10,000¥
Steel Lynx	5	4	2	6	12	3	3	—	10R	25,000¥



MCT Fly-Spy: This Mitsuhama drone is the size and shape of a large insect but can achieve substantially better altitudes. It can serve in an "eye in the sky" role and is handy for shadowing people given the fact that it's relatively hard to spot. This drone is operated with the Pilot Aircraft skill.

SMALL DRONES

Aztechnology Crawler: This small crawler can easily handle stairs and other obstacles. Designed to operate as a remote snooper in rough rural or urban terrain, the Crawler is efficient and robust. Its Pilot program is a step above most drones in its class. This drone is operated with the Pilot Walker skill.

Lockheed Optic-X2: This VSTOL stealth craft is only the size of a cyberdeck with its wings folded up for transport. When it is deployed, it is the size of a large hawk or other bird of prey. Its patented signature-limiting technology makes it a favorite of intelligence agencies and shadowrunners; radar systems and visual and audio Perception Tests all receive a –3 dice pool penalty to spot the Optic-X2. This drone is operated with the Pilot Aircraft skill.

MEDIUM DRONES

Ares Duelist: This medium-sized, roughly anthromorph walker drone is an oddity, some might say a novelty. It is designed to patrol on its two feet like a metahuman security guard and is equipped with blade-arms as its primary armaments. Furthermore, it has been stylized so its outer chassis represents the traditional *oyoroi* samurai armor worn by the Renraku Red Samurai, perhaps a subtle jab at a competing mega. A niche item that is seldom fielded, the duelist has two distinct advantages: its humanoid profile allows it to be mistaken for a more-versatile metahuman guard at a distance, making it useful at facilities guarded by skeleton crews, and its blade-arms are allegedly marginally more effective at combating spirits than the traditional drone combat payloads of guns and more guns. This drone comes with a unique Rating 3 Targeting (Swords) autosoft and mounts a pair of standard swords in special weapon mounts. (The mounted swords cannot be replaced with other weapons, but additional weapon mounts may be installed using the normal rules.) This drone is operated with the Pilot Walker skill.

GM-Nissan Doberman: This tracked perimeter-patrol drone can secure its designated area effectively during day or night conditions. It comes equipped with a standard weapon mount. This drone is operated with the Pilot Groundcraft skill.

MCT-Nissan Roto-Drone: The Roto-Drone is a simple, no-nonsense rotor-wing drone design that is highly modular and customizable. Treat its Body as 3 higher than its actual Rating for determining how many weapon mounts or customizations it can integrate. This drone is operated with the Pilot Aircraft skill.

LARGE DRONES

Cyberspace Designs Dalmatian: This large and robust VTOL recon drone is capable of hovering and has a sturdy frame for its light weight. It is about the size of a lawn mower when stored, and when deployed is the size of a large hang glider. Lone Star and Knight Errant have both licensed the design for urban surveillance and patrol duties. The Dalmatian is operated with the Pilot Aircraft skill.

Steel Lynx Combat Drone: A hardened ground combat machine, the Steel Lynx possesses four wheeled legs and a heavy weapon mount. It is operated with the Pilot Groundcraft skill.

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COMBAT ACTIONS

P. 162

FREE ACTIONS	
Call a Shot	Eject Smartgun Clip
Change Linked Device Mode	Multiple Attacks
Drop Object	Run
Drop Prone	Speak/Text/Transmit Phrase
SIMPLE ACTIONS	
Activate Focus	Quick Draw
Call Spirit	Ready/Draw Weapon
Change Device Mode	Reckless Spellcasting
Command Spirit	Reload Weapon (see table)
Dismiss Spirit	Remove Clip
Fire Bow	Shift Perception
Fire Weapon (SA, SS, BF, FA)	Take Aim
Insert Clip	Take Cover
Observe in Detail	Throw Weapon
Pick Up/Put Down Object	Use Simple Device
COMPLEX ACTIONS	
Astral Projection	Melee Attack
Banish Spirit	Reload Weapon (see table)
Cast Spell	Rigger Jump In
Fire Weapon (FA)	Sprint
Fire Long or Semi-Auto Burst	Summoning
Fire Mounted or Vehicle Weapon	Use Skill
INTERRUPT ACTIONS	
Block	Hit the Dirt
Dodge	Intercept
Full Defense	Parry

SOCIAL SKILL TESTS

P. 141

CHARACTER ROLL	TARGET ROLL
Con + Charisma [Social]	Con + Charisma [Social]
Etiquette + Charisma [Social]	Perception + Charisma [Social]
Impersonation + Charisma [Social]	Perception + Intuition [Mental]
Intimidation + Charisma [Social]	Intimidation + Willpower [Social]
Leadership + Charisma [Social]	Leadership + Willpower [Social]
Negotiation + Charisma [Social]	Negotiation + Charisma [Social]
Performance + Charisma [Social]	Charisma + Willpower

EXTENDED TEST INTERVALS

P. 48

TASK	TIME INTERVAL
Fast	1 Combat Turn
Quick	1 minute
Short	10 minutes
Average	30 minutes
Long	1 hour
Consuming	1 day
Exhaustive	1 week
Mammoth	1 month

MELEE MODIFIERS

P. 187

SITUATION	DICE POOL MODIFIER
Attacker making charging attack	+1
Attacker prone	–1
Attacker making a Called Shot	–1
Character attacking multiple targets	Split dice pool
Character has superior position	+2
Character using off-hand weapon	–2
Attacker wounded	–wound modifier
Defender receiving a charge	+1
Environmental modifiers	Use the Light and Visibility
Attacker has friends in melee	+1 or Teamwork
Opponent prone	+1
Touch-only attack	+2

SUCCESS TEST THRESHOLDS

P. 45

DIFFICULTY	THRESHOLD
Easy	1
Average	2
Hard	4
Very Hard	6
Extreme	8–10

EXTENDED TEST THRESHOLDS

P. 48

DIFFICULTY	THRESHOLD
Easy	6
Average	12
Hard	18
Very Hard	24
Extreme	30+

INITIATIVE ATTRIBUTE CHART

P. 159

INITIATIVE TYPE	ATTRIBUTES	BASE INITIATIVE DICE
Physical	Reaction + Intuition	1D6
Astral	Intuition x 2	2D6
Matrix: AR	Reaction + Intuition	1D6
Matrix: cold-sim VR	Data Processing + Intuition	3D6
Matrix: hot-sim VR	Data Processing + Intuition	4D6
Rigging AR	Reaction + Intuition	1D6

MATRIX ACTIONS

P. 164

FREE ACTIONS	SIMPLE ACTIONS	COMPLEX ACTIONS		
Load Program	Call/Dismiss Sprite	Break File	Erase Matrix Signature	Snoop
Switch Two Matrix Attributes	Change Icon	Brute Force	Format Device	Spoof Command
Swap Two Programs	Command Sprite	Check Overwatch Score	Grid-Hop	Trace Icon
Unload Program	Jack Out	Crack File	Hack on the Fly	Compile Sprite
	Invite Mark	Crash Program	Hide	Decompile Sprite
VARIABLE ACTIONS	Send Message	Data Spike	Jam Signals	Erase Resonance Signature
Control Device	Switch Interface Mode	Disarm Data Bomb	Jump Into Rigged Device	Kill Complex Form
Matrix Search		Edit File	Matrix Perception	Register Sprite
		Enter/Exit Host	Reboot Device	Thread Complex Form
		Erase Mark	Set Data Bomb	

SOCIAL MODIFIERS

P. 140

GENERAL MODIFIERS	DICE MODIFIER	GENERAL MODIFIERS	DICE MODIFIER
The NPC's attitude toward the character is:			
Friendly	+2	Neutral	+0
Suspicious	–1	Prejudiced	–2
Hostile	–3	Enemy	–4
Character's desired result is:			
Advantageous to NPC	+1	Of no value to NPC	+0
Annoying to NPC	–1	Harmful to NPC	–3
Disastrous to NPC	–4	Control Thoughts/Emotions spell cast on	–1 per hit
Character has (known) street reputation	+ (Street Cred, see p. 372)	Subject has (known) street reputation	– (Street Cred, see p. 372)
Subject has "ace in the hole"	+2§	Subject has romantic attraction to character	+2
Character is intoxicated	–1§		

CON MODIFIERS	DICE MODIFIER	CON MODIFIERS	DICE MODIFIER
Character has plausible-seeming evidence	+1 or 2	Subject is distracted	+1
Subject has time to evaluate situation	–1		

ETIQUETTE MODIFIERS	DICE MODIFIER	ETIQUETTE MODIFIERS	DICE MODIFIER
Character is wearing the wrong attire or doesn't have the right look	–2	Character is obviously nervous, agitated, or frenzied	–2
Subject is distracted	–1†		

INTIMIDATION MODIFIERS	DICE MODIFIER	INTIMIDATION MODIFIERS	DICE MODIFIER
Character is physically imposing	+1 to +3	Subject is physically imposing	–1 to –3
Characters outnumber the subject(s)	+2	Subjects outnumber the character(s)	–2
Character wielding weapon or obvious magic	+2	Subject wielding weapon or obvious magic	–2
Character is causing (or has caused) subject physical pain (torture)	+2	Subject is oblivious to danger or doesn't think character "would try something so stupid"	+2

LEADERSHIP MODIFIERS	DICE MODIFIER	LEADERSHIP MODIFIERS	DICE MODIFIER
Character has superior rank	+1 to +3	Subject has superior rank	–1 to –3
Character is an obvious authority figure	+1	Character not part of subject's social strata	–1 to –3
Subject is a fan or devoted to character	+2		

NEGOTIATION MODIFIERS	DICE MODIFIER	NEGOTIATION MODIFIERS	DICE MODIFIER
Character lacks background knowledge of situation	–2§	Character has blackmailed material or heavy bargaining chip	+2§

** Unless otherwise noted, these dice pool modifiers apply to the acting character's dice pool.* *† These modifiers apply to the target character's dice pool.* *§ These modifiers can apply to either character's dice pool.*

RANGE TABLE

P. 185

DICE POOL MODIFIER	SHORT +0	MEDIUM –1	LONG –3	EXTREME –6
PISTOLS		**RANGE IN METERS**		
Taser	0–5	6–10	11–15	16–20
Hold-Out Pistol	0–5	6–15	16–30	31–50
Light Pistol	0–5	6–15	16–30	31–50
Heavy Pistol	0–5	6–20	21–40	41–60
AUTOMATICS		**RANGE IN METERS**		
Machine Pistol	0–5	6–15	16–30	31–50
SMG	0–10	11–40	41–80	81–150
Assault Rifle	0–25	26–150	151–350	351–550
LONGARMS		**RANGE IN METERS**		
Shotgun (flechette)	0–15	16–30	31–45	45–60
Shotgun (slug)	0–10	11–40	41–80	81–150
Sniper Rifle	0–50	51–350	351–800	801–1,500
HEAVY WEAPONS		**RANGE IN METERS**		
Light Machinegun	0–25	26–200	201–400	401–800
Medium/Heavy Machinegun	0–40	41–250	251–750	751–1,200
Assault Cannon	0–50	51–300	301–750	751–1,500
Grenade Launcher	5–50*	51–100	101–150	151–500
Missile Launcher	20–70*	71–150	151–450	451–1,500
BALLISTIC PROJECTILES		**RANGE IN METERS**		
Bow	0–STR	To STR x 10	To STR x 30	To STR x 60
Light Crossbow	0–6	7–24	25–60	61–120
Medium Crossbow	0–9	10–36	37–90	91–150
Heavy Crossbow	0–15	16–45	46–120	121–180
IMPACT PROJECTILES		**RANGE IN METERS**		
Thrown Knife	0–STR	To STR x 2	To STR x 3	To STR x 5
Shuriken	0–STR	To STR x 2	To STR x 5	To STR x 7
THROWN GRENADES		**RANGE IN METERS**		
Standard	0–STR x 2	To STR x 4	To STR x 6	To STR x 10
Aerodynamic	0–STR x 2	To STR x 4	To STR x 8	To STR x 15

** See Launcher Minimum Range, p. 182*

ASSENSING TABLE

P. 313

HITS	INFORMATION GAINED
0	None
1	The general state of the subject's health (healthy, injured, ill, etc.). The subject's general emotional state or impression (happy, sad, angry, etc.). Whether the subject is mundane or Awakened.
2	The presence and location of cyberware implants. The class of a magical subject (fire elemental, manipulation spell, power focus, curse ritual, and so on). If you have seen the subject's aura before, you may recognize it, regardless of physical disguises or alterations
3	The presence and location of alphaware cyber implants. Whether the subject's Essence and Magic are higher, lower, or equal to your own. Whether the subject's Force is higher, lower, or equal to your Magic. A general diagnosis for any maladies (diseases or toxins) the subject suffers. Any astral signatures present on the subject.
4	The presence and location of bioware implants and betaware cyber implants. The exact Essence, Magic, and Force of the subject. The general cause of any astral signature (combat spell, alchemical combat spell, air spirit, and so on).
5+	The presence and location of deltaware implants, gene treatments, and nanotech. An accurate diagnosis of any disease or toxins which afflict the subject. The fact that a subject is a technomancer.

ENVIRONMENTAL MODIFIERS

P. 175

VISIBILITY	LIGHT/GLARE	WIND	RANGE	MODIFIER
Clear	Full Light/No Glare	None or Light Breeze	Short	—
Light Rain/Fog/Smoke	Partial Light/Weak Glare	Light Winds	Medium	–1
Moderate Rain/Fog/Smoke	Dim Light/Moderate Glare	Moderate Winds	Long	–3
Heavy Rain/Fog/Smoke	Total Darkness/Blinding Glare	Strong Winds	Extreme	–6
Combination of two or more conditions at the –6 level row				–10

SITUATIONAL MODIFIERS TABLE

P. 176

SITUATION	ATTACKER DICE POOL MODIFIER
[illegible] cover with imaging device	–3
Attacker firing from a moving vehicle	–2
Attacker in melee combat	–3
Attacker running	–2
Attacker using off-hand weapon	–2
Attacker wounded	–Wound modifier
Blind fire	–6
Called shot	–4
Previously aimed with Take Aim	+1 Dice Pool, +1 Accuracy
Wireless Smartgun	+1 (gear)/+2 (implanted)

NOISE AND MATRIX USE

P. 231

PHYSICAL DISTANCE TO TARGET	NOISE LEVEL
Directly connected (any distance)	0
Up to 100 meters	0
101-1,000 meters (1 km)	1
1,001-10,000 meters (10 km)	3
10,001-100,000 meters (100 km)	5
Greater than 100 km	8

SITUATION	NOISE LEVEL
[illegible] foliage	[illegible]
Faraday cage	no signal, action blocked
[illegible] water	[illegible]
Jamming	1 per hit on Jam Signals actions
Metal-laced earth or wall	1 per 5 meters
Salt water	1 per centimeter
Spam zone or static zone	Rating
Wireless negation (e.g., wallpaper or paint)	Rating

DEFENSE MODIFIERS TABLE

P. 189

SITUATION	DICE POOL MODIFIERS
Defender inside a moving vehicle	+3
[illegible] prone	[illegible]
Defender unaware of attack	No defense possible
Defender wounded	–wound modifiers
Attacker has longer Reach	–1 defense per point of net Reach
Defender has longer Reach	+1 defense per point of net Reach
Defender Receiving a Charge	+1
Defender has defended against previous attack	–1 per previous attack

SITUATION	DICE POOL MODIFIERS
Attacker firing flechette shotgun on narrow spread	–1
Attacker firing flechette shotgun on medium spread	–3
Attacker firing flechette shotgun on wide spread	–5
Attacker firing full-auto (Complex)	–9
Attacker firing long burst or full-auto (Simple)	–5
Attacker firing burst or semi-auto burst	–2
Defender in melee targeted by ranged attack	–3
Defender running	+2
Defender/Target has Good Cover	+4
Defender/Target has Partial Cover	+2
Targeted by area-effect attack	–2

CASH REWARDS

P. 376

BASE COST	3,000¥
SITUATION	**MODIFIERS**
Highest opposing Dice Pool	+ (Dice Pool / 4)
Runners were outnumbered three to one in a combat situation	+1
Runners were outnumbered two to one in a combat situation by NPCs with Professional Rating 4 or higher (not cumulative with modifier listed above)	+1
Runners faced a pack of at least six critters	+1
Runners encountered at least three different spirits (besides watchers) in a single encounter	+1
Runners accomplished the task with impressive speed and/or subtlety	+1
Runners risked public exposure or a raised profile as a natural part of the run*	+1
Job brings runners into direct contact with a notably dangerous part or element of Sixth World lore (the Red Samurai, a Mitsuhama Zero Zone, etc.)	+1
COST MODIFIERS	
Standard run	0%
(nothing special, normal work for a runner)	
Run will make you a cold-hearted bastard	+10-20%
(wetwork, helping corps oppress people, drug running, human trafficking)	
Run has good feelings as part of its reward	–10-20%
(hooding, helping the little guy, taking some "dys" out of "dystopia")	

SHADOWRUN® RANDOM RUN GENERATOR

Roll on each of the below tables as specified, then fill in the appropriate blanks — instant run idea!

For more on designing shadowruns, see **Gamemaster Advice**, p. 335.

The runners go to a meet _____ for their next job.

They are hired by _____ for _____ job, targeting _____.

The run gets complicated when _____TWISTS_____!

MEET LOCATIONS

ROLL 1D6

1	At a bar, club, or restaurant
2	At a warehouse, loading dock, or other underused location
3	In the barrens district or some other urban hell hole
4	In a moving vehicle
5	In a Matrix host
6	In Astral space

EMPLOYERS

ROLL 2D6

2	A secret society (*Black Lodge, Human Nation*)
3	A political or activist group (*Humanis Policlub, Mothers of Metahumans*)
4	A government or government agency
5–6	A minor corporation
7–8	A megacorporation
9	A criminal syndicate (*Yakuza, Mafia*)
10	A magical group (*Illuminates of New Dawn*)
11	A private individual
12	An exotic or mysterious being (*free spirit, dragon, AI*)

JOB TYPE

ROLL 1D6

1	A data steal
2	An assassination or demolition
3	An extraction or insertion
4	A misdirection
5	A protection
6	A delivery

MACGUFFINS

ROLL 1D6

1	A key employee
2	A prototype product
3	Cutting edge technology research
4	A bioengineered life form
5	A Magical object
6	An urban building, rural location, or infrastructure object

TWISTS

ROLL 1D6

1	Security is unexpectedly high
2	A third party is also interested
3	The target is not what it appears to be (group was lied to)
4	The job requires a rare piece of equipment
5	Target has been moved or is being moved
6	The employer decides to double-cross them

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SHADOWRUN®

CHARACTER _____
PLAYER _____
NOTES _____

PERSONAL DATA

NAME/PRIMARY ALIAS

Metatype | Ethnicity

Age | Sex | Height | Weight

Street Cred | Notoriety | Public Awareness

Karma | Total Karma | Misc

ATTRIBUTES

Body		Essence	
Agility		Magic/Resonance	
Reaction		Initiative	
Strength		Matrix Initiative	
Willpower		Astral Initiative	
Logic		Composure	
Intuition		Judge Intentions	
Charisma		Memory	
Edge		Lift/Carry	
Edge Points	⬡⬡⬡⬡⬡⬡⬡	Movement	

Physical Limit: | Mental Limit: | Social Limit:

SKILLS

Skill	RTG	Type	Skill	RTG	Type
		A/K			A/K
		A/K			A/K
		A/K			A/K
		A/K			A/K
		A/K			A/K
		A/K			A/K
		A/K			A/K
		A/K			A/K
		A/K			A/K
		A/K			A/K
		A/K			A/K
		A/K			A/K
		A/K			A/K
		A/K			A/K
		A/K			A/K
		A/K			A/K
		A/K			A/K
		A/K			A/K
		A/K			A/K

IDS / LIFESTYLES / CURRENCY

Primary Lifestyle

Nuyen | Licenses

Fake IDs / Related Lifestyles / Funds / Licenses

CORE COMBAT INFO

Primary Armor | Rating

Primary Ranged Weapon

Dam | Acc | AP | Mode | RC | Ammo

Primary Melee Weapon

Reach | Dam | Acc | AP

CONDITION MONITOR

Physical Damage Track

-1
-2
-3
-4
-5
-6

Characters have 8 + (Body ÷ 2, round up) boxes on the physical damage track; black out extra boxes

Stun Damage Track

-1
-2
-3
-4

Characters have 8 + (Will ÷ 2, round up) boxes on the stun damage track; black out extra boxes

Overflow _____

For every 3 boxes of damage on any one damage track, the character takes a –1 Dice Pool modifier on tests; these modifiers are cumulative within and across damage tracks, see *Wound Modifiers*, p. 169.

QUALITIES

Quality	Notes	Type
		P/N
		P/N
		P/N
		P/N
		P/N
		P/N
		P/N
		P/N
		P/N
		P/N

CONTACTS

Name	Loyalty	Connection	Favor

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SHADOWRUN®

CHARACTER _____
PLAYER _____
NOTES _____

RANGED WEAPONS

Weapon	Dam	Acc	AP	Mode	RC	Ammo

MELEE WEAPONS

Weapon	Reach	Dam	Acc	AP

ARMOR

Armor	Rating	Notes

CYBERDECK

Model	Attack	Sleaze
Device Rating	Data Processing	Firewall
Programs		

Matrix Condition Monitor 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

AUGMENTATIONS

Augmentation	Rating	Notes	Essence

VEHICLE

Vehicle	Handling
Acceleration	Speed
Pilot	Body
Armor	Sensor
Notes	

GEAR

Item	Rating

SPELLS / PREPARATIONS RITUALS / COMPLEX FORMS

S/P/R/CF	Type/Target	Range	Duration	Drain

ADEPT POWERS OR OTHER ABILITIES

Name	Rating	Notes

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MRM

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ENTERPRISES
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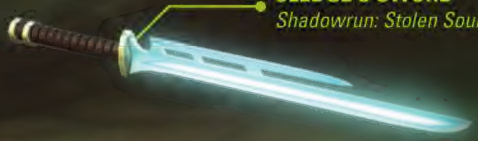

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